

THOMAS  
OF KEMPIS

HIS SOLILOQUIES  
TRANSLATED OUT OF

L A T I N B Y

THOMAS CARRE

*Confessor to the English Nunnes  
of Saint Augustines Order,  
Established at Paris.*



Printed at PARIS.

By M. BLAGEART.

---

M. DC. LIII.

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TRANSLATED OUT OF

LATIN BY  
THOMAS CARRE

Confessed unto the English Nation  
of some dangerous  
Falsities in Latin

Printed at I. R. I. S.

M. D. C. L. I. I.





TO THE VERY  
VENERABLE  
HIS MOST HONORED  
DEARE LADY

MARIE TREDWAY  
FIRST ABBESSE

*Of the English Monasterie of S  
Augustins order established  
in Paris.*



ADAME

*This smale worke  
most willingly runs to your  
Lasp: not for protection, as the*

*ā ij*

ordinarie custome is ( for it  
needes it not ) but for enter-  
taynement ; and that too , in  
the hart ( as it came from the  
hart of him who composed it,  
and comes from his who trans-  
lated it ) to which it speakes;  
not to the eares , which it  
regards not. It comes from a  
brother ; and as such , feares  
not but to find a hartye welcome.  
It comes from a brother ( Tho-  
mas of Kempis ) and in that  
onely name, is more then suffi-  
ciently commended , even to  
all men , much more to you,  
and yours ; to all which it is  
dedicated in your Last person:

and that for diuers reasons.

First, because it is well knowen, that you neuer had yet any thinge so deare, that was not as soone theirs, as your owne, by the motherly and equall affection which you beare to them all.

Secondly, because the thing of its owne nature is common, and speakes indifferently to all in generall, and euery one in particular: and is to be possessed as absolutely and intirely by euery one in particular, without diuision or diminution, as though it were spoken to her alone.

Thirdly, because those cold words, Myne and Thyne (the true source of all dissention and discord) are bannished from your house and harts; as you were happily taught by your holy Father; and he, by the blessed practise of the primitive Christians, where none called ought his owne of those things which he possessed, but all things were comon vnto them.

Fourthly, because you and they, properly speaking, compose but altogether one whole. since euen all of you haue but one hart, and one soule.

So that in every deede (next  
vnder God) your loue is vpon  
them; you liue to them, and for  
them. Nay rather, you and  
they haue but one and the same  
loue: liue, but one and the same  
life; to witt, that which the  
diuine S. Paule taught his  
Galatians: I liue, now nor I;  
but Christ liues in me.

You formerly had another  
present from the same Authour,  
which is as truly excellent, as  
singular in its kind. Though  
in other kinds ( according to  
the seuerall subiects which he  
treates, respectiuely ) he proues  
no whit inferiour, or unlike to

ā iij

himselfe, as the impartiall and  
diligent Reader will iudge;  
whether he looke upon his style;  
the simple and most candid  
deliuerie of his pious sense; or  
his like spirituall Titles and  
hymes, which are wouen; as it  
were, through all the series of  
his workes.

For in this, as in that other,  
he teaches you: how to conferre  
with your Lord in the secrecie of  
your hearts. How to deplore  
your crimes and negligences.  
How to imploy the short  
moments of a miserable life;  
upon the purchace of Eternitie;  
and how to breath after it

incessantly. How to dye to the  
world, to liue to Christ. How  
to keepe att a distance from  
creatures: to undervalue the  
starueing comforts which are  
taken in them: and to putt à  
iust rate vpon the permarient  
consolations which are found  
in God alone: and that, therfor,  
he alone is worthy of our harts  
inquisition, affection and  
union, for whom they were  
made, and out of whom they  
are not able to repose. How  
grace is some tyme withdrawn  
from the deuoute soule: and  
how she ought to behaue her  
selfe in that sadd:st condition

à v

and whither she is to be-take  
herselfe, and how to behaue  
her selfe to find true comfort.

In fine, if in that he teache  
the contempt of the world; in  
this, he incites to the loue of  
Heauen, which immediatly  
followes upon that. If that  
giue motiues leading towards  
internall comfort; this pre-  
sentes the verie vse or exercise  
of the same. If that deliuer  
precepts of interiour consolatiō  
and conuersation; this layes  
downe the practise of interiour  
consolation and beauenly con-  
uersation it selfe; and blesses  
the soule with as absolute a



possession of her deare sponse,  
as the condition of this transi-  
torie life is capable of. Permitt  
me then, **MADAME**. to  
say to you, and in you, to all  
your vertuous daughters, with  
the Prophete Ezechiel: Eat  
this volume, yet eat it so  
with the mouthe of your harte,  
as that you ruminat and chew  
it by a mature consideration;  
and digest and turne it into  
the foode of your soule, and  
your very spirituall substance:  
and you shall not fayle truly  
to experience it to be exceeding  
sweete and delicious to your  
taste, and find it come home to

ã vj

your use, all through the course  
of your whole life. *Abhorre*  
Feare not auarice, deare  
soules, in this behalfe. Feare  
not proprietie. But let every  
one endeouour to possesse this  
Treasure wholly, which can be  
wholely taken, and yet wholly  
left to your sisters use. Use a  
holy strife to make it your owne  
indeede: hoord it vp in your  
bosomes; locke it vp in your  
breastes: you neede no leaue to  
be truly vertuous, truly rich;  
which this blessed auarice, this  
holy proprietie will effect in  
your harts, and begett therein  
an absolute contempt of all

*the bastard riches which this  
world can afford. This was the  
Anthours ayme ; this, the  
Translatours end, to which he  
addes the best wishes of his  
whole hart, in qualitie of.*

**M A D A M E,**

Your Ladishipps, and your  
Religious Childrens, poore  
vnworthy Father and seruant.

**C A R R E**

[illegible]

END

Yours faithfully,  
R. D. B. [Signature]

二五二五



THE AVTHORS  
*Preface.*



heaped vp together diuers deuoute sentences into one litle booke for my consolation, which I desired dearely to locke vp in myne owne breaste; and to haue it alwayes at hand, as a pleasant meadowe, all sett with diuersitie of trees, and beautified with delicious flowres: wherein I might read and contemplate fitt subiects in tyme of necessi-

tie, to solace my mynde  
being clouded with irksom-  
enesse and sorrowe.

And to thend, I might  
clearly and readily find  
out vnder which tree I  
might repose; or what  
flowre was more agreeable  
to be plucked, I placed read-  
letters before the paragra-  
fes of euery Chapter.

And I sett out, withall,  
this present worke in a plea-  
sant style, with varitie of  
speeches: sometymes spea-  
king, sometymes dispu-  
ting, sometymes praying,  
sometymes conferring so-

metymes in myne owne  
person, and sometymes  
again, in the person of  
another,

I beseech the Reader,  
therfor, not to be offended  
with him that wrote the  
same, in that he tooke  
pleasure to discourse with  
himselfe in this sorte. Let  
him also pardon the in-  
composure therof, and the  
haste with which it was writ-  
ten, confidereing that  
plane simple and naturall  
expressions, are more grate-  
full to God, then thinges  
sett out with Art and sub-  
tiltie.

And if happily the sense  
be found either to be lesse  
full and intire; or els more  
obscure then were fitting, I  
earnestlye beseeche him  
piously to correcte them,  
since I must assure him, that  
if he meete with any thing  
vnfitt, it rather fell from  
my pen vnadvisedly, then  
of sett purpose.

Yet further: wheras the  
iudgements of me, though  
otherwise, probable, may be  
deceiued, I haue recourse  
to thee, ô Almighty God,  
and Father of lightes, in  
qualitie of thy humble dis-



ceiple, and represent these  
SOLILOQUIES vnto thee,  
that thou wouldst please to  
approue what is good and  
fitting, and reprove what is  
faultie: and suggest either  
to my selfe, or some other  
faithfull seruant of thyne,  
how to rectifie and cleare  
what is amisse.

Againe, I beseech thee, O  
holy Father, to afford me  
thy poore slaue, tyme and  
conueniencie to spend my  
life in the most fruitfull pa-  
stures of holy Scripture,  
which are, and euer shall be,  
my most deare delights, till

the Day of Eternitie shine  
out, and the shadowe of  
mortalitie vanish away.

And therfor, withdraw  
fruitlesse cares, temporall  
loues, hurtfull passions, and  
other occasions which re-  
tarde me from the holy va-  
cancie and repose which I  
hartily breath after. Because  
the soule that desires to me-  
ditate intertour and diuine  
thinges, must necessarily  
be free and calme, which  
calmenesse that I may at-  
tayne vnto, daigne to im-  
bue and replenish me with  
the bllessings of thy diuine

ne  
of  
all  
nd  
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a-  
I  
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ne  
ly  
ch  
t-  
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th  
ne

sweetnesse, that I may  
speake to thy glorie, and  
myne owne consolation, at  
least in some smale mea-  
sure.





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Beloued: C.





THE  
SOLILOQUIES  
OF THE SOULE

THE FIRST CHAPTER

*Of the desire of the soule seeking  
God.*

Obserue that the speakers here are  
Theophilus, Philothea, and the  
Beloued.

O R, ad, you, you  
Man, the soule, and our Lord.

*Ps. 72.*

**I** T is good for me to ad-  
heare to God. O short  
and sweet word, im-  
bracing God, and ex-  
cluding the whole vniuerse! What

A

2      *The Soliloquies.*

is more to be said, or what more ought to be desired? Is it not sufficient, if what is already said, be performed? And though sundrie other things may be said, yet are they not all to be reduced to this one thing? Pronounce therefore ô my soule, with the Prophete, *It is good for me to adheare to God.*

O my God, thou art my onely good, who alone art good and sweete; To thinke of thee is a deare delight to the deuoute soule, whose hart is not in the world, but hidd with thee in Heauen. That thou alone mayst be to him true reppose and most inward sweetnes? that he may not be dayly tormented in those things where deceitfull lust doth tempt. O my God how stands he affected in hart, who is inflamed with thy loue? what ioy he inioyes, who is delighted in the vanitie of no creature! Is not the sense of his hart expressed in that



*The Soliloquies.*

3

Psalme whence I tooke the theame  
of this speech, to witt, *What is to  
me in Heauen and without thee* Ps. 72.  
*what haue I desired vpon earth?*

*Theo.* O holy and deuoute soule,  
ô soule aspiring to God, what is  
this which I heare of thee? what is  
it thou sayst? seeme all things com-  
prised in Heauen and earth of litle  
consideration to thee?

*Phil.* Yes to me all things are of  
smale esteeme.

*Tb.* Whom dost thou seeke then;  
And without these things, whom  
dost thou desire; and where, out  
of these, shalt thou find him; hath  
he ether name, or place of habitati<sup>o</sup>n  
to be sought by? Where is the place  
of Residence of his glorie, of whom  
thou sungest, saying: *O Lord I loued  
the beantie of thy house, and the place  
of the habitation of thy glorie.*

Answer me I beseech thee. For  
if thou art able to point him out, I  
will accompaig<sup>n</sup>e thee in thy

A. ij

4 *The Soliloquies.*

search, and thy God shall be my God: and well shall it be with vs whyle he shall be found out, and locked vp by vs.

*Ph.* Why doe you inquire this of me, or why doe you endeouour to discover any thing of that nature in my pouertie? Doe you expect that I either should or could deliuer any such thing to you? and though Charitie giue way to it, doth not yet the raritie of the thing, or euen the depth of the secrete, shutt it vp? Why dost thou aske me? inquire of those who haue heard and seene him. Behold they know who he is whom thou dost seeke.

Nay rather inquire of himselfe who knowes all things. Aske of him we speake of who will better discover himselfe vnto thee, and make a more cleare demonstration where he doth inhabite. For he it is who teacheth man knowledge, and conferres his grace vpon the humble.

Draw neere to him, who reuealeth himselfe when he pleaseth, and to whom he pleaseth; nor can any discouer him without his helpe. He alone is able to disclose to thee the ioy of those who loue him; and that in a farre more ample manner then I am able to deliuer it.

*Th.* And now why dost thou speake in this sort O holy and humble soule? conceaue not of me that I would be inquisitiue about a thinge which ought not to be knowne, or cannot be expressed. Be your secreete to your selfe: may your doore be shutt vpon you. Let the signet of faith stand firme: let not the vayle be drawne from the Sanctuarie. Eate holy bread in a holy place. Enter into the Tabernacle of thy owne house. Ascend vp higher into the Refectorie. Enter into the Cellar of the eternall King, or which is more excellent, and speakes more amiablenes, into

A iij

6 *The Soliloquies.*

the bed-Chamber of the heavenly spouse.

I know it is written. *It is not*  
*Mat. 15. Good to take the breade of the chil-*  
*dren, and to caste it to the dogges to*  
*eat.* I know and haue read this. But  
 doe you obserue what followe, and  
 haue mercy vpon me according to  
 her word who said. *The litle dog-*  
*ges eat of the crummes which fall*  
*from their Masters table.*

Doe not therefore conceale the  
 word which I demande, but powre  
 out euen one sparke of inflamed  
 loue from the Ocean of thy inter-  
 nall sweetnes. Afford one smalle  
 droppe of that pretious wine: and  
 sed out, at least, one breath of sweet  
 odours from thy most souueraigne  
 oyntement (that, so I too may  
 be inabled to take a taste) whose  
 best part is knownto thee, and is  
 so ordinarily a wishfull solace.

*is 5.* Why dost thou delay? satisfie an  
 to exceedingly longing hart, and

*The Soliloquies.*

7

open the doore to a friend who hath <sup>expresse</sup> knockt thrice. Speake, o Beloued <sup>what</sup> soule, of the Beloued, howbeit <sup>God is</sup> without neglect of me. If thou art <sup>in him-</sup> not able to speake him such as he <sup>selfe,</sup> is indeed, speake yet what thou art <sup>but</sup> able: for who is able to deliuer him <sup>What</sup> such as he is indeed, or who is ca- <sup>in vs in</sup> pable to vnderstand such a deliubrie. <sup>some</sup> <sup>sort.</sup>

Wherfor if thou canst not ex-  
presse him such as he is in himselfe,  
declare at least such as he is in thee.  
If thou canst not expound what he  
is in himselfe, at least produce  
what blessings he hath bestowed  
vpon thee: for who is able to find  
out what he is in himselfe? Thou  
wilt not be able, because thou hast  
confessed, and hast not denied  
saying; *wonderfull is thy know-*  
*ledge, it is become merueilous to me; it*  
*is made great and I cannot reach*  
*to it, whither shall I depart from thy*  
*spirit.*

*Ps. 138.*

If thou art not therfor able to

A iii!

8. *The Soliloquies.*

sound thine owne spirit which the  
Creator and Quickner of all Spirits  
created, how wilt thou be able to  
penetrate the increated spirit? Didst  
thou not therefore cry out with  
astonishment. *O Lord who is like to*

*thee?* Deliber him then by some simi-  
litude, whose essence thou hast not  
bene able to reach to. Nor oughtest  
thou to deny a part to him to whom  
the whole is not to be revealed.

6. *P.* I confesse (quoth she) you  
are too curious and importune  
with me. You examine all that con-  
cernes me, and adventure to haue  
a finger in the veries secretes of my  
bedd. I sent you to him and you re-  
turne againe to me. Is it me or him  
you seeke; But I demande of you  
of what spirit you are; Cease I  
beseech thee to importune me, be-  
cause he whom thou seekest is  
about me.

7. *Th.* And I replyed, can he who

*The Soliloquies.* 9

seeketh God so easily be satisfied!  
Doe not protract discourse, sith  
you cant so easily afford comfort.  
How longe doe you keepe my soule  
in suspense? why doe you say and  
not say? Linc my soule, I will not  
dismisse you vnlesse you blisse me.  
Howbeit I will take it for my bles-  
sing if you doe discouer him to me.  
Now then, if you haue seene him  
tell me planely, and I will take him  
away.

8. *P.* I see thee, quoth she againe,  
to be in labour, as it were, with a  
desire and loue of thy Creator. thou  
puts a hard question to me, nor  
know I whether what thou deman-  
dest be feasible. He whom thou  
seekest best knowes, nor is it in me  
to declare it. Thy inquirie seemes  
like to that of the spouse in the  
Canticles *shew vnto me* ( quoth  
she ) *whom my hart loues.*

Dost thou desire therefore to learne  
of me who he is, or what Good he

A v

10      *The Soliloquies.*

hath done to me? Vvhy, both my secretes, are to my selfe. Howbeit thou art not so content with this, being nether deterred with his greatnes who out-strips the heauens nor yet auerted by my litlenes, who am of no consideration in his sight. Vvhy dost thou load that heauie burden vpon my shoulders? For to declare this is a labour in my sight, till I enter into the Sanctuarie of God and ynderstand. Vvhy desirest thou to know, what is not lawfull to be spoken.

*Th.* I. replied. And is it not lawfull then? yes truly exceedingly. For we are oft more pleased to know the things to which we haue a more hard access. Yet deale not so hardly I pray, as not to speake at all. Feare not that I should presently betray them to the enemy I will reserue thy word to frinds and that to choyce friends too: speake to me with securitie, in the secretes



of thy silence. We are onely two alone, nor am I delighted with leuitie, nor thou in arrogancie; but in him who made vs confide in him of whom too we speake.

Marrie if he should also come lets giue place and let him be in the midst of vs. If he daigne to speake lets willingly heare him, and let vs be silent the while. At that houre thou shalt not be any way lyable to satisfie my demands. For while he speakes, all flesh ought to be silent.

10. Ph. But she replyed againe, the compact is Good: ypon this condition onely that he be with vs, let vs boldly be caried on to our secrete. Be he the Guid of our conference, and let him leade vs whither we desire to walke.

That Beloued of whom thou dost most diligently inquire, is such and so great that he cannot be expressed by speech, since he is ineffable: so high and sublimely eleuated aboue

God is  
ineffable  
incom-  
prehen-  
sible,  
and  
bound-  
less.

all creatures, that he is alwayes incomprehensible. His vertue and his Magnificence is endlesse; what ever is said or written of him, falls infinitely short of his worth; because he transcendes all.

The Heauens said, he past by vs, soared higher, and farre out-stript vs. The earth answered, if the highest heauens comprehend him not, aske me no questions of him. The starrs sung, we are darkenes, and not light, while he shines. The sea trembled and said I contrayne him not; and the vast bottomes had no acquaintance with him.

Dost thou heare what these pronounce? I haue heard, and haue bene thoroughly troubled vpon their cry; my lipps loyntly trembled; what may then be said vs if we should interrogate him? Let vs aske Lord if thou be he indeede of whom men sung, and whom all things serue

through all ages?

11. D. Yes: I am who am; and be-  
sides me there is no other. I am the  
first and last, creating and governing  
all. *As I live saith our Lord, I will*  
*raigne for ever and ever.*

Exod. 5.

Apo. 17.

12. P. Little worme of the earth, what  
dost thou now say, being ouer spread  
with such a light; Loe thy Beloued,  
speakes with thee, whom thou des-  
medst to be with me. With me he  
was, when I said to him, *It is good*  
*for me to adheare to God*; and with  
thee he will be, if thou also shalt  
say *My soule refused to be comforted*  
*and the day of man, I conuerted*  
*not*; but in thee, O Lord, will I putt  
my confidence, for thou art my  
king, and my God. Thou resem-  
blest not those strageling louers, but  
art the Onely one, of an onely one.  
Thou requirest an onely one, who  
admittest of no companion taken  
out of externes.

The Be-  
loued  
doth  
trye his

Thy speech then is one alone with

*lowers,  
by the  
vicissi-  
tude of  
his de-  
partures  
and re-  
turnes.*

one alone. Though he should de-  
part, sitt widow-like with patience  
suffering all. For this is his custome,  
to depart, and returne, and to  
proue his Beloued, and to render  
her perfect in Loue.

Let not his departure trouble  
thee, if thou dost wish his returne.  
Expect, re-expect. For a while he  
will goe, and after a while he will  
returne. But all this is Loue's doing  
who one while beares vs vp to the  
highest pitch of things, and then  
again waighes vs downe to the fel-  
lowshippe of things belowe.

13. His Loue is most gracious, more  
odoriferous then all the flowres of  
the field, whiter then the lilies, and  
more beautifull then the sparkling  
gemmes. To witt, there is nothing  
amongst the creatures to be prefer-  
red before his Loue, and therefore  
for his loue the whole collection of  
them ought to be despised.

*Then  
trials  
and*

I benig inwardly touched with

*The Soliloquies.*

13

his loue, begane in such a measure to be inflamed in my hart, that bidding a free farewell to all Creatures, I onely begged for his most chaste imbracements: and I sent out vncooth words, not vnderstoode by many, as fire coales cast out of a burning furnace, saying: *What is thereto me in Heauen, and besides thee, what desired I vpon Earth? ô God of my hart, and God who is my part for euer.*

Conceiue now, how well qualified and how great thy Beloued is. Vwho doth incōprehensibly transcende all Entites or Beeinges. And though he be ineffable, and wholly inconceivable, because boundlesse, yet is he exceedingly amiable, maniable, sociable, and exorable, so that though he cannot be comprehended, yet by an admirable manner he may be loued.

For by loue he is caught, by loue closely imbraced: But by desire he

is sought, by Prayer he is knockt  
for, by expectation he is merited. If  
I haue not yet answered your desire  
let him, whom you haue sought,  
answere you; and let him aboue all  
Doctours, instruct you how to find  
him out.

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THE II. CHAP.

*Pf. 85. Of Gods strict iudgement.*

**L**ET my hart reioyce that it may  
feare thy name. O my God  
thou art exceeding amiable, but  
thou art withall too too terrible.  
Let him who loues reioyce: But let  
him who loues not, feare. He that  
nether loues nor feares, is a foole  
and a mad-man.

For it is dreadfull to fall into thy  
hands. And who for feare is able  
to number thy anger. Or who will  
stand to see thee in thy last iudgemēt?

*Heb. 10.*

*Pf. 89.*

*Mal. 3.*

The Soliloquies. 17

For as the roaring of a Lion so thy  
roaring, and as a purging fire, so Iſa. 5.  
thy sword. All the inhabitants of  
the Earth shall be putt in com-  
motion with the huge noyse of thy  
voyce, and all the fundations of  
the earth shall be shaken when  
thou shalt come.

V who therfor will not dread? or  
how will any be able to escape thy  
hands? If man should hide himsel-  
fe vnder a most solide rocke, thou  
shalt thunder vpon him, and his  
strength shall be broken downe. If  
he lye hid in denues or mountaynes  
he shall be haled out, and he shall  
sustayne that wrothfull God, whom  
he endeouored not to pacifie.

Truly there is no place where  
man may hide himselfe from thy  
face: for all things ly open and na-  
ked in thy sight. Thou dost also pe-  
netrate the inward parts of man,  
and beholdst the most subtile mo-  
tions of his thoughts. No secrete

None  
can es-  
cape  
Gods  
wroth.

18 *The Soliloquies.*

therfore lys hid from thy eyes.

○ how terrible thou shalt be to sinners and to obdurate harts! Who now glorie when they doe evil, and they exulte in the verie worst things; and say, our Lord sees not, nor doth God understand. They are as bigge swelled with wayne words; as though thou wert not to come.

And they turne their eyes away, lest they might see to the end.

But thou shalt come when they thinke not of it; and they shall be caught in the snares of their sinns. And as theeves and Robbers being apprehended are confounded, so shall they be confounded in their tyme. Thou shalt deride those who now scorne thy friends; and thou shalt pay them with their owne malice, who hated thy iustice.

Now they waxe deafe to thy call: but a tyme shall come, that they shall cry out, and none shall giue care to them. They now change thy



word into a fable, but they themselves shall then be changed into a flame. For thy word shall goe out with a horrible blast, and with out mercy shall smyte the impious and infidele.

3. What shall then the proud man swollen with knowledge and blowen vp with power say? What will he reply to the sound of the last trumpet? When thou our Lord God accompaigned with Angells and Archangells shalt appeare in maiestie.

Then shall all the wicked, who deride and scorne thy word, be stricken dumme. And they shall meete with nothing but vexation on euery side who feared not to persecute thy deuoute seruant.

Then shall they be confounded with the extremitie of confusion, who forsakeing their conscience and the comon honestie of life, abandoned themselves to vanities,

*The horrid confusion of the wicked in iudgement*

and lewde inticemens. Then shall they be punished, who gaue the raynes to Flesh and blood. Then shall they send out their foringes to heauen, who now entertayne themselves with sweete melodies.

Then shall all be changed into sorrow which was contracted by immoderate ioy. Then shall they be bound vp like fagots to be burnt, who were companions in drunkenness. And reuengefull flames shall cruelly torment those who conspired in sinne through vane loue.

*The  
blindnes  
of the  
louers  
of this  
world.*

O foolish and wretched man O madd and blind louers of this world what doe you doe, and what doe you pretend? How will you be able to escape the wroth of our Lord? Why doe you precipitate your selues into endles torments, for the short delighes which you loue? Why doe you not dread Hell, you that quake at a smale pennance? And you whe

*The Saliloquies.*

21

fly the death of the body, why vse  
you no precaution against the eter-  
nall death of the soule?

Vnles therefore you be conuer-  
ted, and doe penance, you shall not  
escape ( God taking a tyme to re-  
uenge ) these horrid euils, and fire  
torments.

I quake while I consider the last  
day and houre: for then God will  
not be moued by prayers, but will  
proue a iust iudge to all.

O Holy God, holy strong, holy  
and mercyfull Sauour, deliuer me  
not ouer to a bitter death, but grant  
me grace to doe penance; that I  
may worthily lament my sinns, be-  
fore I depart out of this life.

## THE III. CHAP.

*A most  
excellent  
prayer  
of a pe-  
nitent  
soule.*

*Of the sorrow and mourning of  
sinners*

*Psa. 47*

**M***Y sorrow is alwayes in my  
fight. My God, I haue defyled  
my life with many sinns; but behold  
my teares, which I powre out for  
them in thy fight. For I am not  
ignorant that Goodnes dwelles not  
in me, and while I beare a mortall  
body about with me, I am not free  
from sinne.*

*I doe therefore what is naught  
and sinne dayly, and which is yet  
worfe, I let many things passe by  
without sorrow, and due contri-  
tion. For being oft attentiu to, and  
ingaged in exteriour things, and  
trifling curiosities, I am not able  
with such speed to call my selfe*

backe to wholesome teares.

Thence are the dark cloudes of sinnes multiplyed so thicke vpon me that they obstruct the fountaine of grace, and shutt out the waynes of diuine consolations. And is not euen that a huge mischeife? It is so, ô my God, and is increased to so much a higher measure, by how much it vanisheth more quickly from my thoughtes, and leaues no sense of greife behind it.

2. O Lord wilt thou not looke about thee? How long shall I play with thee, and deceaue my selfe? How long, ô Lord, wilt thou be silent? Where is thy rodd? Where is thy goade and thy staffe? Why dost thou withdraw iudgement and Hell from my sight? If these stood still before myne eyes, were it possible, that I could be negligent?

If thou holdst thy peace, that I may amerce, thou shewest patience, which if I neglect, wilt thou not

The more of indige-

*and Hell* afterwards sharply punish? If not  
*are the* in this world, certes in the next  
*spares* thou wilt pay home. To wit  
*to re-* nothing shalle scape unpunished  
*pentan-* nor litle nor great sinne. But much  
*ce.* better were it to suffer in this world,  
 where tears are fruitfull, labour  
 short, satisfaction more acceptable,  
 and reconcilment more easie.

*He wis-* Spare not therefore the rodd, but  
*heth ra-* annoynt my eyes with a sharpe eye-  
*cher to* salve, and reserue not my sinnes  
*he pu-* till hereafter, least I may be deli-  
*nished* uered ouer to the torturers till I  
*new* discharge the last farthing. It is bet-  
*then in* ter for the present to be softly and  
*tyme to* wholsomely stung, then to endure  
*come.* hereafter, the grieuous torments of  
 Purgatorie.

*we haue* I must sorrowe therefore, and  
*iusst cau-* deeply lament my offences. For I  
*so to* haue many things to be bemoaned,  
*wreth* but no cause at all to reioyce. The  
*little can* obscuritie of my hart, my slipperie  
*son to* conscience, pronetic to vice, and  
*laugh* decay

decay of grace, persuaue me to weepe and wale, yea doe euen constrain and compelle me therunto.

And while I reflect vpon my manifold temptations, and incursions of mischeife, what haue I to doe with laughter? spare me, ô Lord, spare me. For what wonder is it if I weepe, my hart being touched with an inward sence of greife, since it is a time of weeping. Blessed be the houre which brings me out sorow for my sinns. Happie the teares, which in contemplation of the sorow of my soule, breake out through the vehemencie of Contrition.

And who is able to sound this Abisse to the bottome, and without flatterie to reprehend my hidden deformities? My God, true light, thou art able to discover all the darke corners of my hart, and to burne all the filth of it, in the spirit of ardor and iudgement. It belongs to thee to giue a new hart, to create a cleane

*God is  
the sear  
cher of  
the hart*

B

hart, and therin, to prepare a secrete habitacle; that may be a place of thy repose, and a Tabernacle of thy name, who art a louer of cleanes, and the guest of a good conscience.

*A Guest  
of a  
good  
conscience.*

But wheras thou dost not willingly visite a neglectfull house, yea leauest it to be illuded with beastly demeanour, therfore am I solicitous least that should befall me. But thou who art mercifull and clement, helpe to repaire my ruines.

Woe be to him, from whom thou departest angrie, Peace to him, to whom thou dost descend, and with whom thou takest vp thy mansion.

What counsell am I to follow, and what way of Saluation is left to me a miserable wretch placed in the midst of snares, and waighed downe with the shacles of my sinnes, but to lift vp my contrit eyes to thee, that so happily my crye may be heard aboue!

Nor can a defiled conscience meet



with, or make vse of a more soue-  
raigne remedie then to sacrifice vp  
it selfe in prayer, with bitter sorrow  
of hart.

*vve*

*must*

*pray*

*and*

*wayle.*

And how can an importune tem-  
ptation be better preuented, least it  
might preuayle against vs, then by  
powreing out continuall prayer, and  
by profound humiliation of a mans  
selfe?

But who will bestow this happines  
vpon me, to pray and weepe as I  
ought? Whence shall I be furnished  
with humilitie and with such store  
of teares, but from thee, ô Lord,  
with whom is mercy, and a plenti-  
full redemption.

O Lord God, the giuer of all  
grace, grant me to deplore euen the  
least things imaginable, and to  
chastise without excuse all in gene-  
rall, as well secret, as knowne offen-  
ces, May these thinges, thus dis-  
cussed, and digested betwixt vs,  
restore me lost grace, and dispose

B ij

me to things that are better and more  
conducing to Saluation.

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THE IV. CHAP.

*Of the deploring of lost tyme,  
and of negligence.*

*An elia-  
gant  
prayer  
of man  
deplo-  
ring his  
miserie  
amidst  
so many  
stopps  
and  
dangers  
of con-  
uersion.  
Ps. 138.*

**T**HY eyes haue seene my imper-  
fection. O my Lord God, what  
shall become of me, since I dayly  
fayle? How shall I perfectly amend  
my life? when shall things goe bet-  
ter? when shall I become stronge  
again? and when shall I master all  
difficulties? I am cast downe into  
the verie flyme of the deepes! May  
there yet some hopes be left of ryling  
again, of amending, profiting, and  
waxing perfect?

In my selfe I haue no hope at all;  
and I wish it were so much more  
firme in thee. A strong distrust ma-  
kes heade against me, because my

*The Soliloquies.*

29

infirmities is increased by a longer vexation, nor doe I therefore find an end of sorrow and iniquitie; And if at any tyme, 'I say, now will I begin, now is the tyme, I will vse my best endeavour; my sinne is straight at hand; the enemy ryfes vp against me, and my bad custome importunately retaynes me euen against my will.

Behold Lord how I am holden downe, and trampled vnder feete, and what a heauie calamitie I suffer! Let thy right hand be exalted, and intranshise me from such as haue hemmed me in, because their feare fell vpon me, my counsell perished, and my force fayled me. My arme was crushed in sunder, and my sword will not be able to saue me.

I discouer not to whom I should betake my selfe, nor doth any apppeare who may receaue and cure me. Thou remaynest my onely refuge; yet am I not without feare and dread because I haue offended thee.

*Unlesse  
God as-  
siste.*

B iij

I haue offended, spare me, I doe wholly and exceedingly repent. Restore vnto me, what seemes iust in thy sight: and be propitious to me. Iustly didst thou forsake me; iustly didst thou deliuer me to the enemye.

Be myndfull, I beseech thee of the clay which thou framedst, and repaire what fell to decay, since of it selfe it could not remayne constant.

Giue eare to my groaning and my necessitie, let not the labour and greife of my hart, fall into obliuion with thee. Behold mercifull father, my captiuitie and my imprisonment, my oppression and exaction, and deliuer the bound en out of his prison, and miserable slauerie.

*A long  
ger life  
rarely  
serues to  
amend  
vs.*

If man should liue for the space of many yeares, what better is he for it? yea who knowes whether he will waxe better or worse? vncertaine is the progresse and out gate of a man, doubtfull his persecue-

rance, by reason of the diuers vicissitudes of euils and dangers of temptations.

Many in the begining of their conuersion are good and humble, who in tract of tyme waxe peruerse, and rebellious. They were first timorous, deuoute, contrite of hart, and addicted to silence, but afterwards became libertines, and dissolute persons, talki tiue, and irrecollected. And who first restrayne their verie thoughtes, soone after waxe carelesse of their words and workes. And so euery euil not prevented in the begining, by litle and litle, growes worse and worse.

*Men are prone to the worse.*

Who ought not therefore to be fearefull and circumspect, sith sometymes disasters doe befall the good and modest? And who knowes whether he be one of the elect, and be able to sustayne all?

All men must be tryed, and who is sure he shall not be burnt, since

*Hence is a inst*

cause of  
feare.

we  
must  
awake  
cau-  
tionfly  
betwixt  
hope  
and  
feare.

fire is the tryall?

All therefore ought equally to feare and hope for better; howbeit we are nether rashly to presume, nor to waxe idle through a vaine hope.

Tried gold shall be saued, and chaffe shall be burnt: consider then, ô man, of what mettle thou art made. The heauensly Melter will melt and purifie the fons of Leui, that is, all those that serue him.

All is not alwayes gold which glitters in the eyes of men: Nor is it allwayes chaffe, or bad money, which suffers violence, and sustaynes affliction: for God lookes into the intentions and harts of men, and euen workes wonders there, where many conceiued all was lost.

Lord God what comfort can I enioy in this world, when I endeubour throughly to waygh the inconstancie and weaknes of all things vnder heauen?

For the rest, I am certaine of thee,

bec  
me  
for  
T  
is i  
qui  
fort  
ame

Of

D  
this  
And  
I am  
vpon  
this  
shall  
cause  
ked s  
As

*The Soliloquies.* 33

*because thou art good, because thy mercie is ouer all those that feare thee for ouer and euer.*

To witt, thy goodnes and pietie, is infinitely greater then all my iniquitie. And this shall be my comfort, as long as thou grantst tyme of amendment.

V. CHAP.

*Of the shortnes, and miserie of this life.* *A prayer be- mo- neing the shortnes and miserie of this life*

**D**Eclare unto me the shortnesse of my dayes. As long as I am in this durty world I am not cleane. And as long as I dwell here below I am a poore pilgrime and stranger vpon earth. I brought nothing into this world with me, and nothing shall I be able to carrie out of it; because naked I came hither, and naked shall I depart hence. *Ps. 101.*

*As a shadowe which is past* *Iob. 2.*

B v

by, and as a shewre blowne ouer by the winde, and as a Guest of one night, soudainely doe I passe away.

*Gen, 47*

All this present life, is but one most short night. My dayes are few and wicked withall, and after a smale respite, they run to an end; and will be, as though they had not bene at all.

When a man is once deade, what is there in man but vilenes? who will then care fore a stinking carcasse? Or who will make inquirie touching the dead man in his absence, who in his life tyme was but litle sett by?

*The fugitiue-  
nes and  
vanitie  
of man's  
life.*

The memorie of man is but short vpon earth, both with such as know him, and such as were not acquainted with him. But the iust man shall be in eternall memorie; because he shall be eternally vnited to God who dyes not,

Happie therefore is he who reposeseth not his hope in man, nor doth



too much ioy in worldly things how specious soeuer: but hath his hart fixed in heauen, because all things here are transitorie and vane.

Runne ouer the whole collection of men from the beginning of the world, to this present, and tell me, what is become of them all? And those that thou yet seest, or hearest to be aliuie how long, I pray, shall they continue? Pronounce therfore of all in generall, *euery liuing man is vanitie.*

2. O poore and miserable, frayle and lamentable life, which by good men is rather indured then loued! And though the wicked loue it inordinately, yet can they not long subsiste in it.

O all thou world of vanitie, when wilt thou come to a periede, and when wilt thou cease to be? But a tyme will come, when all the Elect shall be freed from the slauerie of corruption, who now frequently la-

*This present life is patience to the pious, death in desire.*  
Rom. 8.

ment, because they are farre distant from the kingdome of Christ,

I would to God my hart were wholly wayned from this world, to thend that my Lord God, my immortall spouse alone, might waxe sweete to me.

*The  
cupp of  
the  
world is  
sweet in  
the be-  
ginning  
soure  
in tract  
of tyme.*

Certes the ioy of this fleeting life, is a deceitfull and most bitter cupp. Drinke it downe who will, it shall cost them deare in the end. And by how much any man was more drinke with it, by so much more sensibly shall he be tormented by it: because all the pleasures of this world shall passe away more swift then wind, and shall leaue their louers greife and sorowe.

*The de-  
testatio  
of the  
world.*

Depart therfore far from me wordly glorie, and all foolish and carnall ioy. Thou drawest in and deceiuest many, but in the end forsakes, and sinkes them all. Woe be to those that confide in thee; woe to those that are drowned by thee.

O holy abiection, and perfect contempt of all the pompes of this world, come, and draw neere vnto me; and ô thou wholesome remembrance of my pilgrimage, depart not from me.

What am I but earth and askes? *The me-*  
and whether doe I trade on, but to *more*  
earth? *of death*

O how miserable I am become, and how iustly may I lament when I ponder my pilgrimage, while I am ignorant too, how I shall yet end it.

If I liue well, and perseuere so to the end, there is no feare of a badd death. But who is able to glorie of a good life, and a guiltlesse conscience? He who knowes himselfe to be such, let him glorie in our Lord, and haue pittie of me a sinner.

I desire not to liue; because miserie doth presse me on euery side. My bad conscience feares to dye, because it is not able to answere God one for a hundred. That of the Pro-

38 *The Soliloquies.*

ps. 107. photo doth not resemble this feare-  
full trembling, when he saith, *my*  
*hart is prepared, ô God, my hart is*  
*prepared.*

Lord God of my saluation, grant  
a good end to this life of myne, and  
protract not the dayes of my greife.  
Mourning came I into this prison,  
and I shall not depart out of it with-  
out feare.

This life seemes long to me, but  
that is an effect of frequent miserie  
and sadnes. For otherwise in verie  
deede tyme is not long, but glides  
away more swiftly then a post

*This* All tyme indeed is long to him  
*fe see-* that liues, in affliction and sorrow;  
*es long* and he counts euery day a yeare.

*the* Therefore is this life tedious to  
*afflicted* me, and doth so much more sensibly  
afflict me, by how much I more  
truly looke vpon all its miseries.

And though some smale consolations  
and ioyes doe interuene, yet  
am I to be circumspect to know whe-

ther they be from God or no. If from God, willingly doe I admitt them, yet know not how long they will stay with me. For the rest, how euer smale they are, they please me, and I relish them.

But I wish, ô my God, they would plentifully flow into me, and make some long stay with me.

But such as are not from God, are vile, and shall quickly perish, though at the first blush thy seeme delightfull and sweet. So, euen so doth this life passe, consisting of a continuall mixture of good and euil.

As long therefore as I am here I am a poore pilgrime. I am not able to say. *It is enough*, because this present life doth not afford a sacietie of any good thing: but thou, ô Lord, in whom I belecue, art my good, for which I longe.

When therefore thy glorie shall appeare, and shall replenish me,

*The comforts of this life are to be admitted as from God, not that they are to be rejected,*

then I will confesse vnto thee, that I am throughly faciated.

*To satisfie in fe.* Meane while, because this word is shutt vp from me, a manifold sorrow doth beround my soule.

And therefore, calling to mynd thy holy word, I often say, *my soule is sad euen vnto death*; well were it with me, if this houre were part ouer, so that no greefe nor sorrow should possesse me: but I beseech thy pietie, o Lord, to conserue me.

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## CHAP. VI.

### *Of breathing after eternall life.*

*prayer* **D***rawe my soule out of prison*  
*le* The force of sorrow permitts  
*ath.* me not to be silent. For why doe I  
*after* any longer remayne here belowe,  
*end* since I know not what I am good for  
*this* here? I goe but verie slowly for-  
*sent* wards; nay, God grant I goe not  
*by* backwards.  
*son*

*The Soliloquies.*

41

How well thou wouldst doe with me, ô Lord, if thou wouldst quickly take me out of this world, least I might waxe still worse and worse. My life grones in greife, and yet becomes not better in deede.

*of the  
conti-  
nuall  
dangers  
of sin-  
ning.*

*Pf. 141.*

If thou dost expect, I am not therby made better, nay I abuse thy longanimitie. If thou dost correct I scarcely indure it, because thou dost persecute drie stuble.

*A desire  
of death  
by rea-  
son of his  
smale  
aduan-  
cement.*

Why dost thou not therefore take away thy seruant? Or why doth he possesse the ground? that is, why doth he dwell amongst the good, whyle he doth not amend his life and manners?

Why doth he so vnworthly, and frutelessly possesse the place of some other of better life, while he yet liues, and behaues himselfe so coldy and negligently? while I am possessed with this sadd thought, I speake in the cares of my God.

But good Lord, cry not out in thy

anger against me, cutt downe the tree, and throw it into the fire.

I accuse my infirmitie before thee that thou wouldst pardon me confessing to thee. It is my part to accuse, thyne to pardon. It is my part, bitterly to weepe and wayle, thyne mercifully to comfort the sorrowfull.

Afford me therfor, ô Lord, at more plentifull grace in this life, or els quickly dispartch me out of this world, least the breach might be made wider and wider.

For to liue a long life without a mendment, Is but to heape vp punishment.

Nor can such a life please me, which while it makes no progresse, is not yet lamented.

For he that leades a holy and pious life, sorrowes for euery smale defect and harbours alwayes a great desire to encrease more and more in grace and vertue.



But what should he doe here, who perceiues a dayly deficiencie in himselfe, and a strong insurrection of the flesh against the spirit?

Or he either, who being frequently ouercome by irkesomnesse, or waxing cold by the neglect of tyme, giues ouer resistance? or casting away his spirituall armes, followes the bent of the flesh, and abandons himselfe to the inclination of his owne will.

Alas, my Lord God, such an one, drawes neere to deathes doore. And while he liues in body, he incurreth the death of the soule.

Oh how euery one ought to feare the seduceing and distroying enemye. None secure, none cleane: there is a certaine frailtie generally in all men.

But thou, ô Lord, who canst doe all, and who knowest all, rayse him vp whose hart is broken, and clense the vncleane from all spott and ble-

mish, and giue him a new spirit in his bowells: that all coldnes and languishment may depart, and a spirituall feruour returne, and let thy loue remayne immouable to the end.

He onely wants thy ayde, who is retarded by his owne waight. Nor is he able of himselfe to throw oft the heauie load of sinne, till thou sendest grace from heauen powerfull enough to loose the bonds of our passions: which I beseech thee to grant vnto me, because there can be noe good life without grace, nor is eternall life obtayned without it.

That I now liue in this body is no consolation to me; because death is better for me then life. And why? for that this life putts me at greater distance from eternall life; which can neuer approach, till this present life be destroyed by death, and death also perish with it.

My desire therefore lookes vp-

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wards, and my hart breathing after eternall rest, grones and cryes out a loude. *It is sufficient ô Lord, take away my soule*, which thou didst redeeme with thy pretious bloude.

Open the gates of thy kingdome and leade in the poore pilgrime who returnes to thee from banishment. Heare me, ô Lord, and loose me from this bodily tye.

What should I doe here any longer? I am neither good for my selfe nor others. To what end doe I therefore liue, being burdensome to my selfe, and troublesome to my neighbours? What shall become of me! If thou hast prouided some better thing for me, why are my desires delayd?

I assent to thy ordonnance because it is good. But in my selfe I find so much miserie, that it is burdensome and teadious to me to liue in the world. For I sinne dayly, and euen heape sinne vpon sinne; nor doe I yet

doe penance as I ought.

If I were therefore freed from this sinfull body, and associated vnto thee in thy kingdome, neither should I sinne any more, nor thou be offended in any thing, but I should eternall prayse thee.

But thou dost as yet beare with me, and shew all kind of patience. I know my fault, my sinnes are they which exclude me from thy kingdome: because no vncleane thing shall enter into it.

But when shall I be without sinne? When shall I be clenſed to the full, that I may not feare to be repulſed, but rather reioyce to be admitted to enter. If I be not more carefull then hitherto I haue bene, and make a more cheerefull progresſe, I much feare my hope will be but ſmale.

But thou, ô Lord, who wilt haue none to perishe, but all to be ſaued: beſtowe a more plentifull grace vpon me, to mend my life, and hope for

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heavenly things : giue me the spirit  
of internall fatnesse.

Let my hart neuer be ioyfull, ac-  
cording to the flesh, here below; but  
with dreadfulnessse let it expect  
death.

Let noe care nor creature retayne  
me, but let thy desired presence  
drawe and solace me.

Happie is he who expects thee, ô  
Lord, yet more happie he who is al-  
readie departed out of this miserable  
life, where he hath noe trouble to  
feare or feeble any more.

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THE VII. CHAP.

*Of the desire of a good death.*

**O** Lord thou art my hope from  
my youth. In this confidence I  
flye vnto thee, till the last houre, and  
the tyme of my dissolution draw  
neere. O that I were well provided,

that I might die vnder the hope of thy grace!

O that I had put a happie periode to the last day of my life, and that I had putt downe my fleshly burden; how many dangers and feares should I then haue auoyded? Happie is he whom thou hast elected and assumed, who hauing putt of his fleshly garment, departs out of this world to his father; out of exile to his kingdome; out of a prison to a Pallace, out of darknesse to light, from death to life, from danger to securitie; from labour to rest; and from all miseries to endlesse Beatitude. O happie soule who alreadie inioyes his rewarde, reioycing in thee his Lord God.

Woe be to me, because my seiourning is still prolonged. Oh how graciously, and mercifully wouldst thou deale with me, if thou wouldst call me away sooner, and suffer me to come vnto thee, that where thou

art,

art, there also might I be. Ah that thou hadst taken me more tymely out of this world, whilst I was not yet acquainted with it's corruptions and vncleanesse, and while I yet feared to offend euen in smale matters, how Good thou hadst bene to metherin! But now by liuing longer I haue wandered further from thee; and haue manifoldly offended thee.

Alas what haue I done? I haue followed fleshly passions, espoused vanities, repudiated vertues, lost innocencie, added euill to euill, and, say me, I haue experienced what I haue reade Woe be to the wicked man in euill! Hardly did I at last returne; in my returne I made but poore speed, I was not feruent in my aduancement, nor made progresse therein; nay, contrarily, I waxed cold in my wonted feruour. Hence it was that I often feared to dye, because though my conscience, called me tot, I liued not as I ought. I fr

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quently wished death, out of an apprehensio I conceiued of the danger of temptations, least my last error might proue worse then the first; and I said: ô that I were euen now deade in grace, that I might not be subiect to so many calamities vpon earth. O that God would voutesafe quickly to take me away, and putt a periode to all my labours; how happie should I then be!

But all things, ô Lord, are placed in thy will. If thou dost decree, to accorde what I demande, It's fourth-with executed. If not, thy blessed will be done. I may make knowne vnto thee my desire, and the calamitie which I suffer, but not as to one who alreadie knowes it not, but that by such an addresse I may draw some refreshment to my soule.

I am not ignorant that I am but yet poorely prepared for death; for my conscience doth still greatly feare

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*The Soliloquias.*

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Yet is it no wonder, if I a sinner  
dreade, since so many holy fathers  
dreaded too, because thy iudge-  
ments and ours are farre different.

Yet how should I prepare my  
selfe? For I know it were but fit to  
prepare my selfe better against that  
day, which I know not how soone  
it may arriue. I will renew my good  
purposes more firmly: I will be-  
wayle my negligences by past: I will  
wholy sacryfice my selfe vnto thee:  
and I will commend my selfe to thy  
mercy for euer.

My Lord my God, all my workes  
consiste in thy mercy; nor are there  
indeede any merites of ours, but  
through thy pietie, and compassion.  
And here-in is placed all my hope  
and confidence.

But how goes it with the good and  
spotlesse conscience? What saith the  
chaste and deuoute soule?

Marrie, come, saith she, my Lord  
Iesus, come then and hie thee. Par-

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don my heynous crymes, breake my gyues in sunder: free the fettered prisoner out of his prison: out of the denne of miserie.

I haue earnestly expected thee, attend to me, and heare me. Leau me no longer in the mansion of this world. Let it suffice, that hitherto I haue fought; that for so longe a tyme I haue liued in banishment; that I haue not merited to inioye thee; nor haue bene able to contemplate thee face to face.

At least now grante me the fruition of my wished ioy, which is neither bounded by any tearme of tyme, nor is ouercast with the clouds of any teadioussnesse. Discouer that face of thyne to me which the Angells eternally contemplate. Let thy voyce sound in my eares, which they heare without any intermission at all.

Come ô Lord Iesus, and free me out of a stranger land. Call backe an abiect creature into its owne

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countrie, and restore a fallen man  
vnto his wonted degree of honour.

Come deare Redeemour and  
make me partaker of thine eternall  
glorie.

It's high tyme that I should re-  
turne vnto thee. It's tyme that thou  
shouldst commend this body of  
myne to the earth, whence it had  
its origen. It imports not much  
where it be cast, or how it be vsed,  
so the soule be saued, and come vnto  
thee.

Let all fare well with my soule  
which I commend vnto thee, and  
let my corps be content to repose in  
hope, till it be raysed againe at the  
last day. For be it buried where it  
will, it can neither be farre remote  
from thee, nor vnknownen to thee.

Take me away from the societie  
of men, and bring me to the societie  
of the Angells.

I am wearie of this temporall life:  
and the day of eternall brightnesse

doth onely delight me.

Let not the old serpent oppose himselfe against my departure out of Egypt. Let not the enemye barke at me in the gate, nor his gastly Ghost daunt me, nor the horreur of death terrifie me.

But let thy holy Angells faithfully assiste me, strongly ayde me, manfully protect, mildly and sweetly receaue me, and conduct me with exultation to thy heauenly Residence.

Let also the Virgine Marie, the glorious mother of God, with all the heauenly compaignies, assiste me.

And thou my good, sweete and best Iesus, restore me the ioy of thy countenance, and reprocue me not from thy beloued fanits, but reflect and call to mynde, o thou son of God, that thou didst redeeme me from the enemye with thyne owne precious bloode.

Receaeue me in thy glorie, thy

*The Soliloquies.*

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mercy, thy goodnesse, because I haue exceedingly desired to make my *Pascha* with thee.

O happie day of my wished reward. Ah blessed houre of my happie passage, which I haue longe wished for, and kept alwayes before my eyes.

What haue now the tribulations, and pressures which I haue suffered in the world, hurt me? What haue the contempt, labour, and humiliation which I haue endured in the world preiudiced me?

Thou wert alwayes life to me, and now to dye will be gayne: and to be with the in thy kingdome, will be a thing permanent for euer.

Laude and glorie be to thee, who art the life of the liuing, the hope of the dying, the saluation and repose of all that come vnto thee.

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## CHAP. VIII.

*Of one deade to the world, whose  
life is in Christ.*

**A**Verte myne eyes that they may  
not see vanitie.

O Iesus my life, my life which knowes noe death; Grante that I may be contrite for loue sake; by loue to be wounded; out of loue to dye, least the flesh domineere ouer me.

I am not yet perfectly deade to the world, but the old man liues still in me, begetting diuers quarrells in my interiour man, and ingendring desires of verie much wickednesse, whence I passe many discomfortable nightes, and dayes full of tediousnesse.

O when shall I be able to pronounce with confidence: But I esteem

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med my selfe, as one deade vpon earth. He who is deade regards not the prayſes of men, nor the reproches of the reprochfull, becauſe he is deade.

He that is corporally deade, ſpeakes not, he ſmells not, he taſtes not, nor executes any operation at all, nor doth he heare the vanities of this world, nor yet ſee curious and beautifull things, or euen any thing that may allure to the loue of any vile toyes vpon the face of the earth.

To witt he is deade to the world, he is not in the world, but in God to whom he liues, according to S. Pauls expreſſion to his beloued diſciples: You are deade, and your life is hidd with Chriſt in God. One ſo deade, ſo ſpeakes, ſo thinkes, and ſo ſees the things which are without, as though they were not at all: Becauſe what is ſcene is temporall and vane, what is not ſcene, is true and eternall.

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Thither are his eyes turned, to that he aspires, that takes vp his hart, for that are his labours imployed, thither he desires to arriue.

His will, his loue, his searche, his senses are all set vpon that which is within and appeares not; to witt, the great, the cheife, the eternall Good, of which his thoughtes are neuer wearie with thinking; for it is too too deare, delicious, delightfull, and more then vnspcakable.

Such a happie creature liues at a huge distance from present thinges, and the whole affection of his hart is lodged vpon eternall thinges; keeping the appetite of sensualitie continually vnder him.

Because sensualitie seekes exteriour thinges; desires delightfull, beholds present, and neglects future thinges; it flyes, as farre as it is able, sharpe and bitter thinges, which yet are often wholsome for the soule.



Hence it is that it leaues not the mynde in peace and quiete, but castes before it diuers phantomes, which can hardly be expressed, at least in very deede they are worth nothing.

But he that hath the grace of spirituall fortitude, may the more easily subdue the insolent insurrections of the flesh, singing in the word of the diuine vertue: Our Lord is my helper, I will not feare what the flesh is able to doe.

2. And therfor though sensualitie wage warre against him, and the voyce of the fleshe be heard to mutter betwixt its teeth, as it were, yet doth he not easily yeild consent; because the loue of God, which inwardly comforts him, is much stronger.

He is sometymes so deliciously, so powerfnlly, and so ardently drawne to God, transported and possessed by him; that he scarce sees or perceiues the thinges which are

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about him, and make a noyse in the world: because he is not indeede there, but els where; not here belowe, but aboue with God and in God, who moues him inwardly, listes him vp, and transports him, as it were, in a fire charett, that he may at length inioy, the happie and long sighed-after holy desire of his hart.

He is not found within; no, for his beloued hath caried him away into some other place. Where he heares the words of his dearest Lord all alone: and he is ouerioyed to heare the voyce of is spouse, of whom he entertaynes no suspicion.

Nor doth he presently powre out his boxe of pretious oyntements, to fill them with vanitie: but hides the new found treasure, and scales it vp, least the foote of pride might creepe in, and make all the vertue perishe.

For so he saith in the Canticles:

*Place me as a seale vpon thy harte  
&c.*

It is Good to seale the harte, and put a garde ouer it, least happily the beloued might declyne and flye, who cheifly seekes and visites an humble harte.

He conferres vpon these thinges within him selfe, and falls in admiration of so greate a Good, which passeth all sense, and any gift which can be presented.

He admires againe and againe, and diligently demandes, saying, *what is this?* And he wonderfully reioyceth, because Manna shewrs downe from heauen.

And he who sendes true breade from aboue, giues also, together with it, a Good vnderstanding to him that eates of it, that he may know that euery best gift, and euery perfect present, comes from aboue, descending from the father of lightes. And this word, saith he, is

from God too Nothing without him; all that I haue is from him.

3. Againe he admires and laments, that he so litle loues so great a Good, where with too he findes him selfe so content and happie. Why also he doth not more frequently applie him selfe to see and heare the same, then which nothing can be inioyed either more sweete or more happie.

And now I wishe that so it may be hereafter: for I am woderfully delighted in it, and shall yet be more, prouided that I applie my selfe diligently therto.

Let my Beloued come into my hart that I may taste of his aples, let him come towards me, and shew him selfe vnto me, and I will doe the like to him: for he is my Good, and my ioy.

Then he begins to breath after, to desire and vehemently to loue this Good, wherein is all good; this

ioy, which compriseth all ioy; This one thing in which are all things, great and litle, high and lowe: yet is none of these created thinges, but beyond the reache of all humane conceptions, the Beginning and End of all thinges created by him.

And here vpon he desires some tymes to be totally replenished with this Good, and to be wholly imbued with this most delicious ioy, and to be as it were drayned to the bottome, and consumed by it, therby to faciate his vnsatiable loue; so that he is nothinge of him felse, but wholly his whose is the fire and flame of loue, and whose; this wonderfull worke: that so he may be carried away more violently and greedily, and be made one spirit with him.

Nor doth he here vpon either extolle or ouerualue hymselfe; or despise and vnderualue others; because this is not his owne but Gods

free gift. And therfor he ought not to glorie in him selfe, but in him who graciously bestowed that comfort vpon him.

For he aymes at no prayse, he regardes no externall fauours, but seekes the Beloued; thirsts after his prayse and his fauour; in whom be inioyes all thinges, and meetes with more then all the world can giue.

Because he preferres his loue, his sweetnesse, his delightfull fruitiō before all transitorie thinges; and loues and most earnestly desirs his honour about all thinges.

And he can neither boaste, nor vanelly glorie in what good soeuer he possesses. God is his prayse, his glorie, his exultation. He is his true and sincere ioy, his cheife and onely good, his whole desire and accomplishment.

And his cheife desire is that others too should reioyce after the same manner, and inioy the same

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Good both here, and in Heauen  
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For this he sues. for this he prayes  
that he would vouchsafe to mani-  
fest him selfe to all men; and that he  
would conuert and draw all men to  
himselfe, that he alone might be  
lauded and glorified as being cha-  
ritie it selfe, and the fource of all  
loue, which can neuer be drayned.

To witt he loues all men more,  
then all men are able to loue him.

Yet he is pleased if any desire to  
loue him from the bottome of his  
hart, though he fall short of louing  
him according to his worth: because  
he outspeakes, outstripes, exceeds  
all men in loue.

## CHAP. IX.

*Of living in a distance from  
Creatures.*

1. **B**Ehold I fledde a farre off, and  
remayned in solitude.

O how wholesome, how delightfull  
and sweete it is, to sitt in solitude in  
a high silence; to speake with Good  
alone, and to haue the fruition onely  
of that cheife Good, wherein all good  
things are found!

O that I were so inseparably vnited  
to that most simple and onely Good,  
that I might not be moued with the  
affections and distractions of transi-  
torie thinges, nor curiously fixe an  
eye vpon any creature, or visible  
thinge.

Vnhappie man that I am, who will  
deliuer me from this mortall body?  
Alas how oft doth my soule dye for



creatures which it loues. For them it oft forgetts its Creatour, and is seduced.

My wauering and vnconstant mynd will now haue this thinge, and now that; Now it is here, and now there, seeking repose in creatures, and findes it not.

For though creatures afford some delight in the vse of them. Yet in their fruition they are not able to giue sacietie.

The harte of man is inscrutable, and who is able to found it? Thou ô Lord knowes that man's cogitations are vane.

2. O eternall, supream and immense God, the Creatour and Ruler of all thinges. I am thy creature which thou madeft in thy power.

I was made to loue thee, and now I haue a wil to loue thee, nor can I so much as I would, being fettered with vane loue, and ingageing affection of transitorie toyes, out of

which though I endeavour to free my selfe, yet scarce can I effect it, yea not at all, without greate paine and trouble.

Ah if thou wouldst waxe sweete and sauerie to me, they would forthwith flye and perish?

Yet now and then I discover thy inuisible thinges with the eyes of my soule, by the meanes of the thinges which are made, yea euen thee the cheife Good, the true eternall God.

I am much delighted in these thinges too, and would fayne dwelle in them, but presently being waisted thence by I know not what blast of winde, I am called away from that delight, and am held in a miserable languishmēt by the loue and waight of visible thinges.

For loe, I firmly purpose in my hart in token of a league made betwixt vs, that, for thy noble and pretious loue I will neither see nor loue any creature, but contemne all thin-

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ges and relinquish my selfe and all that is myne,

13. But here-vpon wordly cogitations, which are as it were the neere neighbours and kinsfolkes of this sinfull flesh of myne, floke vp into my hart with such a countenance of of delight, as though indeede there were some felicitie in them; and as though I should proue much a looser by the bargain, if I should contemne them.

They shew, I say, a ioyfull countenance, but they hide their sadd and miserable end.

They lay open their present delights, but what calamities are to follow them they conceale?

They would haue thee, forsooth, to be sought in all thy creatures, and that nothing should be abandoned or contemned as being the workmanship of thy handes, ô my God: and so they often leade me away from my good purpose, and in the

end, doe vtterly seduce me.

4. O how vane, how deceitfull, and in a manner nothing are they experienced to be, euen taken at the best, and in their prime flourish; which vanishing away after their fugitiue delightes, they leaue me among the brambles and thornes of a gauled conscience?

Woe be to me, ô Lord, yea woe be to me againe, because I haue too lightly giuen credit and consent to vanitie; and haue so easily abandoned thee who art Truth it selfe.

O how hugely did I trespasse herein, that I did not neglect all other thinges and adheare vnto thee!

To witt, I was created to loue and inioy thee, but by inordinate loue to creatures I haue lost thee, nor yet could I find in them any rest for my soule.

Conuerte me ô Lord, vnto thee, and leaue me not in the myre of terreane delightes, thou who hast had the

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CHAP. X.

*Of the contempt of all earthly  
consolation.*

1. **M***Y soule refuses to be comforted.*

Doe not run a gadding, ô my soule, after vanities, and deceitfull madnesse, but returne to thy Lord thy God, because he is the head-spring of all consolation.

What soeuer thou lookest for in man, or in the other creatures, thou lookest, and shall euen find to be lost. Because though some solace may appeare in them, yet shall none be permanent.

Why dost thou vanelly and knowingly deceiue thy selfe? It's a madnesse to begge of a poore begger,

when a rich man is readie to bestow  
vpon vs what is sufficient.

Euery creature is but a begger  
in point of comforting vs. But God  
is rich in grace, and giues to all a-  
bundantly, and without reproch;  
prouided that they seeke diligently,  
and patiently expect.

2. Returne my soule, returne o  
doue to Noe in the Arch, to Christ  
in the secreete of thy harte, for it is  
not secure to stay long abroad. Doe  
not seeke for exterior consolations,  
if thou dost desire interior de-  
lightes.

Stay not out of the Arch with the  
crowe, but flye speedily from the  
Carion, returne with a spirituall hū-  
ger, and Christ will feede thee with  
the breade of Heauen.

If necessitie vrge, or infirmitie doe  
sometymes keepe thee abroad, be-  
ware of delay, returne home apace,  
least thou mightest perish in the  
floode of wordes, or be caught in the  
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There are many baites layd for the soule which loues to range abrode: and many assurances for the doue which quickly returns. Who when she found no place to repose in, she returned to Noe in the Arke. Thou therefore betake thy selfe to thy Cell, dwell there, and esteeme it a greeuance to thee to be abrode.

3. Blessed is the soule whose conscience is pure in the sight of God, nor is possessed by any vane thinge, defyld with any loue, or infected with hatred. Its blessed which seekes no consolation from any creature, but reposes all confidence in God.

Blessed, the soule that refuses all externe and temporall quiete, and all that bringes bodily commoditie, and willingly for Christs sake embraces labour and want.

Blessed the soule that leaues it selfe in Gods handes to be dealt withall

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according to his pleasure.

Blessed is the soule which neuer seekes its owne glorie, neuer desires that its owne will be done, but intends, affectes and preferres, the glorie of God, and his blessed will in all thinges.

Blessed is the soule which estrangeth it selfe from all temporall thinges, and conserues it selfe pure in the presence of God in euey respect.

4 What euer soule thou be'st that art thus qualified, be not a litle glad, because thou art fitt to be conuersant in most internall and celestiaall thinges, and to prayse God day and night.

Thou art happie, and blessed by God himselfe; because thy desires are placed aboue, thy handes and armes are extended like the Cherubins two winges; thyne eyes are pure to contemplate God.

Thy whole interiour vigour and endeouour is imployed, and still as

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cendes vpwarde, and neuer stoopes  
or returnes till it finde him, whom  
alone it loues, more then all togei-  
ther. And hauing found him she for-  
getts all other thinges to follow him,  
whither soeuer he pleaseth to leade  
her.

And as soone as euer he speakes to  
him, he reioyceth to heare his voyce  
when he saith: I am thy beloued, thy  
deare, thy onely delight. I am thy  
rewarde exceeding all measure. Be  
humble in prosperitie, and strong  
and constant in aduersitie.

Thus are those that loue me cōforted  
by me. And what a sweete entertay-  
nement must thou needes conceiue  
they shall meete withall, when being  
freed from all vexation of body and  
mynde, they shall be admitted into  
eternall rest.

O that I could inioy such sweet-  
nesse, as the holy, beloued, and de-  
uoute soule possesseth, when sensua-  
litie being subdued, it ryseth vp in

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Spirit, and is eleuated aboue it selfe into the imbracementes of the Beloued, and is ioyned to God by the band of a most intimate and choyce Loue.

O my God, the true treasure of my hart, thou art not ignorant, that this would proue the onely solace, and cure of the most inwarde sorowe of my soule.

But thou art the bestower, and infuser of this vnction. Thou teachest, thou exhortest, thou helpest; thou dost comfort, aduance, confirme, Thou leades out, and bringes backe againe, and dealest as thou wilt, with the deuoute soule which thou hast chosen. And all that thou either dost acte, or will, is good.

But I (not vnlike to an infected caske, who am vnworthy of the infusion of thy holy spirit,) I humbly sue to haue the holy streame therof deriued into my soule too, that I may taste the sweetes of thyn inter-

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shall loue, and take a foretaste of the sacred delights, which I am confident the soule that doth carefully serue thee, doth often experience.

I felt a farre off these heavenly sweetes, when I onely made reflection in my Meditation of certaine interior endeouours and applications of the holy soule.

6. But thou knowest, ô Lord, how rare a thinge that is with me; how weake my cogitations of eternal things are; how drye my wordes for the most part; how obscure my vnderstanding; how disquiete my conscience; how confused my interior house, being deuoyde of illumination and deuotion; and that by no others, but my owne onely fault.

Yet sometymes endeououring to haue accessse to interior thinges, calling together, to that purpose, the inward cogitations of my hart, I seriously reflect vpon the blessing, of a choyce soule; what heavenly

ioyes and spirituall delightes she hath in her hart; What peace, what tranquillitie, what hope and exultation in God her Sauour, whose speech is sweete, and his face beautifull.

And though the continuance hereof be but short, yet is it a sweete and agreeable moment.

7. While I thinke of these thinges, and thou dost inlighten my darknesse, I meete with iuste complaints against my selfe, and I feele, as it were by the secreete chinkes of grace, that the soule intimately vnited vnto thee is, so, and so qualified; and, in such and such a manner, thou speakest to her.

To witt, she abstaynes from all visible thinges, and thou speakest to her in spirit of inuisible thinges.

She seemes to be forsaken of all creatures, and thou dost comforte her by ineffable meanes.

And then, I say againe in my

harte: Woe be to the sinfull soule,  
to a burdened conscience, to a luke-  
warne conuersation, deuoyde of  
the light of grace, and spirituall  
comfort, which seekes for teares  
and findes them not.

But peace to this happie soule which  
loues Christ sincerely, and neuer  
turnes the eyes of her hart away  
from him, but aymes still at that  
which is pleasing in his sight, be-  
cause she shall walke in peace and  
equitie, and no aliene shall share in  
her ioy.

She shall finde that her holy va-  
cancie is good, and shall taste how  
sweete her Lord God is in whom she  
putts her confidence.

She fyes, as farre as she is able,  
from externall tumultes, and she ex-  
pectes, with great aduantage, his  
cominge into the inmost closet of  
her harte.

Loe thus it is that God workes in  
his chosen vessells! Who comes

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vnto him shall not returne with  
emptie handes, for he freely giues  
water to the thirstie, and breade to  
the hungrie.

8. O my God when thou entrest  
into the house of a soule that loues  
thee, dost thou not nourish her with  
thy milke, and sometymes euen  
transporte her with thy ouer-flo-  
wing delightes, making her capa-  
ble of thee, without any comporeall  
image or species. O veritie veritie,  
what huge force hath charitie, and  
what wonders doth she worke!

Then thou dost most secretly  
conuey thy word vnto that soule,  
and impartst vnto her all old and  
new thinges in charitie, and most  
happie fruition, where all humane  
words doe cease.

Frō that tyme thou makest her most  
absolutly confident in thee in pointe  
of her eternall repose, of the societie  
of the Saintes; for by powering out  
vpō her the spiritual streames of thy

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grace before hand, thou rendrest her  
therby more powerfull to hope for  
what she sees not, and to contemne  
present thinges, which possesse our  
senses.

Be myndfull of me, a poore begger  
(deare father) by the bowells of thy  
mercy; and send me downe true  
bread from Heaven, a good word  
replenished with consolation and  
grace.

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CHAP. XI.

*Of great sweetnesse and con-  
solation in God.*

**A**ll my bones shall say, ô Lord,  
who is like unto thee!

He is one, nor is ther any like  
vnto him; He is my God, and all,  
compared to him, is nothing. He is  
a most intimate loue, and a most  
faithfull friend; who neuer forsakes

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one that loues him, but doth willingly keepe companie with him.

And if at any tyme he hide him selfe, and suffer his friend to be in straghtes, he doth it not to reprove him, but to proue, purge, and instruct him.

He doth not therfor vtterly leaue him, but euen more wisely instruct him, that it may appeare what euery one is of himselfe, and how farre he is able to goe.

Thou art beautifull, ô my beloued, and wonderfull amiable, not to flesh and bloud, but to the mynd; not to the eye, or any sense, but to the faithfull soule, endowed with a cleane hart, and giueing him selfe ouer to inuisible and spirituall things.

He therfor who desires to be vnited to thee by a deuoute affection, must necessarily mortifie in himselfe all carnall affection, and conserue a pure conscience.



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For thou art offended that any should haue recourse to frayle creatures to begge comfort.

Therfor thou calledst vpon me interiourly that I should loue thee; and commandest me to expect thee; because then I shall find thee, when I vnderalue my selfe; and will what thou willest.

And this shall be all my happines, freely to worshippe, freely to serue thee, without any feare of losse, or hope of purchaceing aduantage by loue; because thou approuest a soule which loues without interest. Yea such an one alone is vnited to thee in life and death.

But I being cast farre from thee take often an ether way by loueing creatures which perish, and that too, neither as I ought, nor to the end I ought.

2. But least I might perish in these thinges, I will speedily returne backe, by confedering thy prayser

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in them, and by applying my affections vnto thee.

And thou, ô my Lord God, who madeſt all thinges of nothing, grant me grace to take occasion of all thinges to ſinge vnto thy holy name. For thyne is power, thyne wiſdome; thyne goodneſſe and pietie, eternall glorie and Maieſtic.

Thy kingdome is akingdome of all Ages: and thy Dominion in Generation and generation. Thou diſpoſeſt of all in Heauen and in earth.

Thou knoweſt all, and haſt all thinges in thy hand: nothing reſiſtes thee, nothing troubles thee. But thou iudgeſt all thinges in tranquillitie, ſubduing euen rebellious hartes to thy ſernice.

Thou knoweſt all things which are in the vniuerſe, and boundeſt them within certaine limites euen before they be made. Thou art the God of heauen and earth, the Crea-

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tor and Gouvernour of visible and  
inuisible thinges, and the disposer  
of all tymes.

Conserue, I beseech thee, thy  
seruantes, dispersed through all the  
world farre and neere, yet remayning  
wholly deputed to thy seruice. Grant  
that they may denounce thy prayſes,  
and preach thy glorie with one  
accorde.

Excite their hartes powerfully  
with loue, and make them con-  
clude all their workes with a happie  
end.

3. O how pious and sweete thou  
art to those that loue thee! How  
saourie thou art to those that  
relish thee! Those that haue tasted  
thy delights know better by ex-  
perience how to thinke and speake  
of them.

Because thy sweetnesse excelles  
all sweetnesse, and sweetens all bit-  
ternesse.

O my Lord God, holy persons

spoke of thee, nor were the Prophets silent.

All the saintes from the beginning of the world beleued in thee, serued thee, and worshipped thee in viſites, and offeringes: they blessed and prayſed thy holie name, because they acknowledged thee to be the Creatour of all thinges, and were confident in thee about all thinges.

They knew thee in their viſions; for thou didſt reueale thy name vnto them; they knew no other besides thee.

They obserued the law of thy commandementes, which thou didſt deliuer vnto thom. They followed not the most foolish fictions of the false gods; but adored thee, who liueſt for euer and euer who didſt create all thinges.

They extolled their voyce in confession of thy prayſe, because thou thundredſt in their eares from

about, saying.

I am who am There was no God framed before me, nor shall there be any after me. I made the thinges which are to come; nor did I forgett the thinges which are by-past.

Hearing and vnderstanding these thinges, they rayfed vp the eyes of their faith at a great distance, belce-uing that God will saue vs; and that he who is to come, will come, and will not deceiue vs.

Knowing these thinges before hand, they were not a litle comforted; but greatly admiring the presence of the Maiestie which was coming, they were stricke with astonishment.

Taking breath a litle, and beholding the power of the Almightyes approche, they pronounced with ioy. That's he, that's he, that's our God, nor is there any other. He hath begun with vs and will saue vs. He cannot deny himselfe for

he is true.

As we heard, so we see: as we beleeue so we speake. and giue testimonie to Truth. God spoke once, he spoke, and all was made. My counsell shall be permanent; yours, ô sons of men, shall perish.

4. VVoe be to you who entertayne Idle thoughtes, and laughe at Gods word. VVoe be to you who feigne wisdom out of your owne hartes, and are puffed vp in your owne power.

Heare the word of God, you that seeke God: know that his iudgemēt is with the inhabitantes of the earth.

It is not safe to be auerted from him, remayne ferme, and consider his wayes. Returne and come vnto him, he will graciously receiue you; because he is a mercifull and clement Lord.

He doth not keepe wroth, as man doth, but freely pardons all sinne, and withall restores the former grace,

with the addition of a subsequent.  
Onely conuert your selues with your  
whole hart, and dedicate your selues  
to him, to serue him with a faithfull  
mynde.

This voyce of the Saintes, foundes  
in my eares as a melodious har-  
monie at a banquet, and as sweete  
frācincense fuming out of the Thu-  
rible; so doth Gods word relishe in a  
pure hart.

And thy Saintes, ô Lord, being re-  
plenished with thy spirit, breathed  
out the memorie of the abundance of  
thy sweetnesse, and left thy wordes  
for vs to denounce.

But my speech is shut vp in  
straightes, and hath not roome to  
ascende. Marrie if fire descende from  
aboue, my speeche shall be inflamed.  
And if it continue to burne, it will  
consume me.

I shall not be able to subsiste be-  
fore his face: for as chaffe is wasted  
away by the winde, so shall sorowe be

driwen from my hart. And as rust by fire, so shall my sinnes be consumed.

The diuine fire which burnes all, shall cleanse the house of my hart. Descende and kindle. Touch me but a litle and I will flye away.

Things past shall be no more, and future things I will not count vpon, because new things succcede, and all euill shall be buried in oblivion.

Old things shall passe away, new things shall thronge in vpon vs, and holy desires shall abounde, flocking out of all partes, wher soeuer the milde spirit breathes.

5. Feare shall be no more, but all things shall be replenished with loue, and consternation shall cease; for this is a change of the right hand of the highest. And therof what I speake is his prayse not myne. He is consolation to him that weepes; breade is bestowed vpo him that de-

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mandes, and the thirsty receiues a satiating draught.

There is a hand stretched out to ayde the sicke man, and a staffe is sent to the infirme. The languishing regaynes strength. The wearie meetes with rest. A new light is scene to shine to the desparate, and he that cryes, receiues answer. The blind discouers the infusion of a delightful light, the way discloseth it selfe to the ignorant and the gate is wide layd open to him that knockes. Truth is present to him that doubts, and authoritie supportes him that staggers, and Mother-Charitie goes out to meete him that affectionately seekes.

God himselfe runs out to preuent him who desires to speake with him, being more ioyfull then he, saying.

Behold I am here. What new thinge hath befallen thee? Doe you forgett, that you ought to labour and suffer for my sake? I had a desire

to goe alonge with him, nor did he forbidd it, and I presently ascended and forgott what euer difficultie I had past.

I desired to dwell with him, he was vnwilling to contristate me, but taught me in a milde language, that it was not expedient for the present. Thy desire, saith he, is agreeable in my sight, and I am pleased with the petition which thou dost preferre vnto me, but it must be deferred yet a while.

Goe and returne home, and acquainte your friends, how gracious God hath bene with you. And say to them: prepare your hartes euery one of you, putting off the heauie burden of sinne, and be cautious, and courageous against the craft of the Diuell.

VVatch and pray, that you enter not into temptation. The tyme is neere at hand that I will come, haue a care that I find you prepared. Loe

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CHAP. XII.

*Of seeking the cheife and onely  
Good.*

1. **S**ay unto my soule I am thy sal-  
uation.

O soule how noble thou art! with  
what a wonderfull power thou art  
endowed, who can neuer be satisfied  
and repose, vnlesse thou enioyest the  
cheife Good, and meetest with the  
verie last end! Which hauing once  
knowne, and found out, thy actiui-  
tie ceaseth.

O Good, farre exceeding all good!  
6 end without end! VVhen shall I  
enioy thee without measure, or end?  
I meete with many good thinges  
here below, but such, as greatly in-  
crease thirst, but quench it not, but  
saciate not.

To witt there is one necessarie thing. This one thinge I seeke, this one I greatly desire. For this one are all thinges; from this one spring all thinges. If I haue this I haue content. **V**Which vnlesse I obtayne, I remaine still in a wauering motion: because many thinges are not able to fill my capacitie.

But what is this one thinge? I cannot expresse it, nor yet cease to desire it; because ther is nothing better, nothing greater; nay it cannot euen be conceiued by thought.

For this one thinge is not amongst all thinges; but it is one thinge aboue all thinges. It is my God, to whom it is good for me to adheare and inheare. To him I say, to him I crye: *say vnto my soule, I am thy saluation.*

2. What dost thou further desire my soule, though thou bee'st euen bigge with desire? Is it not better to adheare to one then to many? From

one thinge, many thinges, not one from many.

Cease then to seeke after many thinges: vnite thy selfe to one, sticke to one, for all consistes in one.

Let others seeke many exterior things. Seekethou the onely internal Good, and it is sufficiēt for thee.

Behold one seekes a village: another betakes himselfe to his negociation: another hordes vp great store of gold and siluer: another hath an ambition for pleasures and honours.

Another aymes at friendes and kinsfolke, and applies himselfe to giue visites to his acquaintance and allies.

Another is delighted with faire cities and Castells, and ledd with curiositie of seeing, and trauels abroad to see the world.

Another desires wisdom; another power, another master-shippe. Another demandes royall or princely obseruance. And after this manner,

one couets this, another that, whether they be in a secular or spirituall condition.

Few sett their affection purely and simply vpon one, and for one. And thence it is too, that they meete with noe constant and permanent peace, nor relish internall grace.

For those that are Christs seeke not temporall and terrene thinges, as though they were then great and glorious if they abounded with all these thinges.

3. What these men seeke then, belonge not to thee, ô deuoute soule, Noe not at all.

Yea I deteste all these thinges; because my Good is one. My affection is settled vpon one, my desire is one, and that one is better to me, then all thinges aboue or below.

If thou hast light vpon so great a good, I exhorte and persuaade thee to lay hold vpon it and locke it vp, as being the verie thinge for which  
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thou haste condemned all. For by the possession of that, it will proue nothing of trouble to want all thinges besides. Yea thou wilt most rightly iudge it fitting, for the purchase of that, to bestowe all, and suffer all thinges.

4. Now therfor, o my soule, neuer cease while thou liuest in this mortall body, to seeke this singular and superlatiue Good; because that cannot be sufficiently found which cannot be comprehended to the full.

But then shall we come to the end of our seeking, when we attayne to the happinesse of enioying. For then shall that onely one, be all in all thinges, being sufficient to all and euery one.

And albeit he be sought there too where he is alwayes found; yet it is not with paine, as here below, but with the fullnesse of ioy and Loue.

And how gracious he is to pious

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persons, even in this life, is proued by many titles, nor are indeede experienced soules ignorant of it.

Howbeit obserue but a litle, by Mistresse-Experience her guidance, What names diuine pietie hath. I will lay downe a fewe before you, leauing many more, and withall more sacred, to be taught you by his grace.

Loe, he is a *Spouse* to the *Louer*, and a dreadfull *Lord* to such as serue him as yet with feare.

He is a *Father* to his good children; but to the wicked a rigorous *Judge*.

He is a *Phisitian* to the *infirm*, and to the *Stronge* a *solide foode*.

He is a *Teacher* to the *ignorant*, and eternall *Saluation* to such as obey him.

He is a *way* to *beginners*, *truth* to *proficientes*, and *life* to the *perfect*.

He is *hope* to the *Penitent*, and a *best comforter* to the *Iuste*.



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He is the glorie of the humble,  
and the punishment of the proude.

He is light in darknesse, and a  
lanterne by night.

He giues cordialls to sicke soules,  
and the wine of gladnesse to the  
verie sadde.

He stands with those that fight,  
walkes on with such as make pro-  
gresse; runns with the feruent, and  
flies with those that contemplate.

He is present with those that pray;  
he speakes with those that reade,  
and rests with those that meditate.

5. In all these thinge, one and the  
same God doth operate, appearing  
to euery one according to his blessed  
will. There is nothing to be repre-  
hended in his speech, nor can we  
finde accesse to his wonderfull wor-  
kes. For his iudgements are great  
and inscrutable. Nor dare any say  
to him, *Why dost thou doe thus?*  
and why dost thou rather chuse this  
man then that? Man's interrogato-

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ries against the Almighty are foolish; and all the inuentions of the son's of Adam, are vanitie, and nothinge.

6. How doe these thinges please thee, and how doth God relish with thee?

He is maruellous agreeable to me, nor can what he doth displease me.

He is iust and who can argue him of iniustice? for he that goes about to argue him, makes him his enemye, and shall be conuincd by his admirable light.

But what are the thinges you haue heard of him in his sight? scarce a smale sparke, in respect of that which he is indeede.

Doe You desire to know, what that may be? Ile tell you. I know not what it is; yet this I know, that its wholly aboue my reach, being, as it were, a certaine inaccessible miste whose begining and end are equally ynknowne.

Let therfor your cheife meditation, and more ordinarie affection of hart, be imployed vpon the humble footestepps of Iesus; and clyme not vpon a suddento high thinges, least you might be oppressed by glorie.

But wheras a great and feruent loue, doth sometymes forgett reuerence and feare, it is to be borne withall, if now and then, the Louer being deeply inflamed with the desire of the Beloued, endeuour not onely to know how the litle babe Iesus lyes waylinge in the manger; or hanges vpon the Crosse: but euen too, how he gloriously raignes in Heauen, and wonderfully disposeth of all thinges below.

7, Willingly doe I follow thee in earth, ô amiable Iesus, yet much more willingly would I follow thee to Heauen.

Wher my treasure is, there shall my hart be. Thou that art sett at

thy father's right hand, art my treasure, dearer to me then all the creatures, as being incarnated and eleuated into the heauens for my sake. Thou lesteft me an example vpon earth, and reseruest thy selfe for my reward in Heauen.

Vpon thee therfor doe I looke, after thee will I absolutly walke. My hart saith vnto thee, my face doth searche after thee, I will seeke thy face, ô Lord, incessantly.

How long, ô Lord, shall the vision of thy glorie be delayed? Why dost thou hide thy face, and repute me thyne enemye? Thou knowest that all this while my hart is tossed hither and thither; my affection is haled to and fro, till it be fastened on thee in Heauen, as to its dearly beloued.

For the force of loue cannot rest, but continually is inquiring the newes of its Beloued, sending messengers abroad, and redoubling its

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earnest sute. Nor doth it leaue it so  
neither, because loue will needes  
absolutely possesse, what it greedily  
couets.

8. O Draw me therfor that I may  
begin to run after thee with feruour  
I haue neede of a drawing, and that  
a powerfull one too. For vnlesse thou  
drawest, none comes, none follo-  
wes; because euery one is crooked  
backe vpon himselfe.

If thou drawest, behold I come,  
I speedily run, I spring on, I burne  
with feruour. If not, I neither run,  
nor seeke, nay scarcely doe I desire  
to follow. Marrie if thou lendest thy  
assistinge hand, I run so much the  
faster, by how much thou drawest  
more powerfully.

This is the voyce of my Beloued:  
*When I shall be exalted from the  
earth, I will draw all thinges to my  
selfe.*

Good Iesus, draw me after thee,  
and not onely I, but enen all of vs

will run in the odour of thy pretious oyntementes. First therfor draw me after thee, and then others seeing the example of a good life, will also follow.

Yet least we might waxe proude it is much conducing to our good, that we should experience that it was not in our owne strength, but in the odour of thyne oyntements that we began to run.

9. The diuine draught is that without which none makes progresse, nay euen begins, as thou hast also said: *None comes to me vlesse my father drawe him.*

He therfor whom the father drawes followes thee, and forsakes himselfe. He seemed well drawne, who said: *Master I will follow thee, whereeuer thou goest.*

But all are not capable to stand so affected to thee. Nor is it an argument of a weeke soule, so readily to run after thee in all thinges.

10. What hinders thee, o my soule, to leaue all thinges for the loue of Iesus? Why art thou so vn-willingly separated from vane and transitorie thinges? V What doth the sight of them all helpe vs?

For while you take mortall thinges, and visible creatures in your way, hoping for satisfaction in them, you loose better thinges.

In so doing, you deuide your selues from the cheife Good; and abandonne the true, blessed, and eternall life. And therfor you shall remayne miserable and vnhappy, replenished with greiues and anxieties.

For what way focuer you turne your selfe, you shall continually meete with sorowes, and much ircksomnesse, vnlesse you returne againe to your Creatour; because he is your peace, and your secure repose.

But contrarily you are blessed and shall not dye, if you stay not vpon

E v.

terreane thinges, nor ingage your  
feete in the claye; but rather consi-  
der, and venerate, not so much the  
Image which vanisheth, as him  
whose image and superscription it  
is indeede, in the mirour of the crea-  
tures.

For wheras you seeke not the crea-  
tures to enioye them, but behold  
them to blesse the name of the crea-  
tour, framing to your selfe out of  
his highest and lowest workes, a cer-  
taine ladder to helpe you vpwards;  
you shall be deliuered out of this  
world, and be closely vnited to your  
most desired end, which is God,  
blest aboue all for euer. **Amen.**

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## CHAP. XIII.

*Of the union of the soule with  
God, and of the with drawing  
of grace.*

**M***Y soule hath cleaned after  
thee.*

My God my true Comforter, thou knowest I am not wearie of thee, but thou mayst dayly speake to me in my secreete.

But where should I seeke thee, if by chance I should loose thee for a tyme?

Thou art God exalted farre aboue all thinges, and I the poorest of all creatures here below. Thou art in Heauen, and I in the world. Thou alone the highest, and I a poore miserable beggar.

E vj

Who was euer yet able to measure the distance betweene heauen and earth? These two are indeede at a great distance, but thou art yet further placed aboue me.

Who will then be able to vnite me vnto thee? It must be thyne owne worke, or els none will be able to performe it. Yet if it so please thee, it will be effected out of hand.

Thou knowest how subject I am to fall, of my selfe; but thou giuest me abilitie to stand, and make progresse.

And therfor my soule depends vpon the gift of thy spirit, and the infusion of thy sauing grace. If thou so order, I shall be raysed from the earth: but if thou dost turne thy face from me, it shall be in a commotion in it selfe.

Yet out of thy charitie and myldnesse thou wilt receiue me, and thy right hand shall wonderfully conduct me to thee.

2. All yee inhabitants of the earth and sonns of men giue eare. It is not onely possible, but euen easie to God to effect what is written: *together in one the rich and the poore.* I am poore and want all thinges: but he is riche; he is my God and wants nothinge.

If I haue no great experience to alledge for this, yet am I not without a faithfull testimonie, wherby I am able to proue that the soule may be vnited to God by grace. *My beloved is myne and I his*, saithe he, *who feeds among the Lilies.* this is there-  
 stimonie of the spouse and the faith-  
 ful soule, the bridgroomc and the  
 Bride, a verie fitt and stronge testi-  
 monie of the holy law.

Another like vnto this: *I will Fu-  
 ther that all should be one, as we are  
 one.* These are the excellent testimo-  
 nies of two bookes, wherby it is ma-  
 nifestly conuincd, that the soule  
 may be familiarly vnited to God,  
 according to his heauenly grace.

And though the thing be rare, yet it is exceeding deare and well knowen to the louing hart And albeit it is hard, yet is it not wholly impossible.

And therefore let none dare to separate, or annoy her, whom God pleased so closely vnite ynte him selfe.

If we stand astonished at the gracious gift of this vnion, admire also with astonishment the excellencie of his goodnesse, together with the singular vnion of the humanitie which he assumed.

It is lawfull for him to doe what he pleaseth, who alone workes great wonders. If you looke for desert you shall find no other but his blessed will and preature.

3. O the sweete societie which is had with, and vnder the winges of Christ! ô gracious coniunction full of the loue and sweetnesse of the holy Ghost, which is betterfelt then

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This is a peculiar priuiledge of a soule which hath stript her selfe of all terreane thinges, and is noe more intangled in the loue of this present life, by the interiour sense and bent of the mynd.

By how much the Louer is more acquainted with this, by so much lesse is it knowen to me. Yet fayne would I be present with the deuoute soule, when she tastes these heauenly sweetes; which then happens when she is with her beloued spouse at noone-tyde.

But all thinges goe ill, exceeding ill with her, if Iesus chance to be absent; if the Soueraigne streames of grace cease to flowe; if she haue no fauour nor delight in holy scriptures; if she find prayer or meditation irksome to her; if the cloudes of her hart grow so thicke, and naughtie cogitatio<sup>n</sup>s waxe so preualent, as they can hardly be repulsed, but they at-

tempt at once to ouerthrow all the good workes of her life past.

4. O my Lord God why dost thou deale so with vs? What kind of play is this? O pious Iesus what pretention hast thou in so doing? might it not be displeasing to thee, I could wish that thou wouldst haue a raore ample conference with thy Beloued.

I stand in admiration to obserue, that thou permittest her, now and then, to sitt in huge desolation, euen when she desires thy presencē with the whole affection of her hart, to enioy her chaste delightes therin. Thou dost so regardlessly passe by her, and goe from her, as though she were not the woman that earnestly sought thee.

But she is left weeping all alone: for this may seeme to be her voyce: *My soule earnestly desired thee by night.* Then it is her night, when thou the true light art not with her,

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She sues therfor; for thy presence,  
least she might be benighted by the  
darknesse of sinne.

For alas she is lyable to many in-  
commodities, as soone as the grace  
of thy visitation is withdrawn from  
her. For had she suffered nothinge,  
she had not cryed after thee with so  
feruent a desire.

There was another soule also that  
cryed out whose words are mentio-  
ned aboue; *my soule did cleave after  
thee.* But I conceiue nothinge either  
is or can be a matter of so great af-  
fliction to her, as the want of thy  
presence.

5. Nor is it any wonder if the  
dearely louing soule fall into a  
founde, by reason of this want.

For thou art sometymes found  
with much difficultie, and being at  
length found, she is overioyed at  
thy returne, hoping to passe a merrie  
day with thee: and not being aware  
of thy departure, she suspects no

harmed.

But thou in thy wisdom other-  
wise disposing, dost often leaue her.  
For thou suddenly slipst out of her  
hands, while poore she thinkes not  
of it.

I Prayse thee, yet in this how  
should I prayse thee? If thou be'st  
indeede laudable and sweete, why  
dost thou seeme to loose it by this  
proceeding?

Were it not euen thou thy selfe  
that didst it, she might suffer scan-  
dall in it. But in thee she cannot be  
scandalised, by whom she knowes  
she is so feruently beloued.

Discover vnto me, then, I beseech  
thee ô God, what thou reasonably  
intendest to intimate vnto vs by this  
thy proceeding: for I haue a great  
desire to vnderstand it: and I con-  
ceiue it not amisse to haue some  
smale knowledge of it: because none  
of himselfe is able to looke into thy  
secreete iudgements; but it is thine

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owne light which doth cleare all obscurities, and repelle all thinges hurtfull.

6. For what reason therfor dost thou euer and anone hiddenly withdraw thy selfe from the soule while she knowes it not? Dost thou loue her, yea or noe? If thou louest her, why dost thou flie ô my Beloued? If thou dost not loue her, why didst thou vse to visite her? And if thou louest her not still euen to this houre why dost thou returne againe, knocke at the doore and enter?

Dost thou vse a certaine lightnesse in running to and fro? Be it farre from vs so to conceiue. At least thy frequent changes are no light matters to her, but a huge trouble of hart. Yet happily she would not complain so much, if thou saydst to her planely: *I goe, and I come againe, and thy hart shall reioyce, and none shall take thy ioy from thee* But now thou vvest no word or sen-

tence to her: but she calls to mynd that saying, whose truth she experiēceth: *Iesus hid himselfe* and went out of the temple.

I haue therfor a few thinges against thee, and my complaint ryfes from good groundes. Howbeit my desire is, to be humbly instructed, not impatiently to quarrell. Please therfor to giue answer to my Petition when thou iudget fitting.

7. Permitt the Deuoute soule also to speake somewhat for her selfe, that she may more clearly vnderstand. And doe thou on they part freely answer.

Yes thy Beloued will heare thee willingly, and will replee peaceably, least thou mightst otherwise suffer some detriment therby.

For who will comfort thee, vnlesse he be thy comforter? And who will support thyne infirmities with more clemencie, then he that beares all without being burdened?

And to whom canst thou more securely reueale the sad occasions which befall thee, then to him who knowes all thinges entirely? Or in whom canst thou repose more confidence, then in truth which cannot deceiue?

Now If there be any externes, and such as are no friends of the spouse in this place, let them be turned out. But if he be one that loues the spouse, a faithfull, deuoute, and internall person, let him freely enter.

Again if any one be a diligent keeper of his owne conscience; a louer of vertue and discipline; if a person of a pure affection, and cleare vnderstanding; if humble in himselfe, and pious to others; if he be one capable to vnderstand the good thinges he heares not in an ill māner, if not vanelly to blabbe them abroad, not rashly to condemne them, not to defend them with animositie, nor proudly to preache them; but con-

trarily to venerate what he vnderstands not, and to interpret obscure and misticall thinges in a sound sense. Let such an one be brought in, and let him be freely present at this conference.

For the affection of the hart ought rather to be obserued from the sound of the wordes, then the qualities of the words. Declare then vnto me, ô soule, how thou art able to sustayne thy selfe, when the grace of the Beloued is absent? I find much difficultie to suffer his long delayes with patiëce and myldnesse, and I doe in a manner conceiue the same in you. If you please then, let vs sitt downe here together, and let vs conferre vpon this subiect, for some consolation to vs.

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CHAP. XIV.

*Of the sorowe of the soule in the  
absence of the Beloued his  
grace.*

THEOPHILVS and PHILOTHEA.

1. Ph. **M**Y hart slumbred with  
wearinesse.

Theo. What kind of speeche is  
this which thou vtterest? VVhy  
doth thou say, ô Sion, our Lord  
hath forsaken me? Feare not, ô  
daughter of Sion, thou louing and  
côteplatiue soule; Behold thy kinge,  
the Beloued of the Beloued will come  
vnto thee. Ryse vp, and stand on  
high and obserue the ioyes which  
will come vnto thee from thy God.

Ph. I sought him and I found  
him not: I called on him, and he  
answered me not, and therfor my

soule slept with weartinesse.

*Theo.* To whom I replyed. There is the voyce of the Turke, hauing lost her mate. It is not to day, as it was yesterday and aireyesterday, when thou didst singe the Canticke of ioy. The morning is past ouer, and the eauenning is come, and yet the Spouse lyeth in the Mooneyde, and there is no accessse to him. Thy words speake nothing but sorowe, and thy eyes are blubered with teares. Thou art a soule in dolours, and needest consolation. But tell me, whence is this?

*Phil.* My difficultie is not about gold and siluer, or any earthly thinge; nor about profit or damage; not in point of iniurie or penurie, since I am crucified and deade to the world.

*Theo.* If I mistake thee not, thou didst longe a goe renounce all earthly thinges. But hast thou happily together with them perfectly deneyed

deneyed thy selfe? and come to the contempt of thy selfe, This I desire to know. Few arriue at this perfection, and yet this is particularly exacted at thy hands. Whence therefore art thou troubled? What hast thou lost!

If thy sorow be for thy Beloued, I grant, that not without cause sadness hath filled thy hart. Nor can any thing be delightfull vnto thee, till he returne againe, and shew thee his countenance.

But in the interim how dost thou support thy selfe, ô delicate soule, who art wont to leane vpon the Beloued? And it is indeede euident to me, that he is not alwayes present at our wishe. VVhen he is absent then, what consolation hast thou? and wherein dost thou quiete thy selfe? Disclose thy secreetes to me though otherwise full of greife.

That you greiue for Christs absence, none doubteth, but such as

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loue not at all. You are sorowfull indeede, but it is for Christ your Spouse, not for this world. And I know too that vpon his returne you will againe be comforted: because he will not forgett you for euer. For he said: *I will not leane you Orphans. I goe away, and come againe to you.*

The words therfor which flow from you with so much resentment, are not vanelly spent, but they speake a louing hart, and pearse a frozen one, which is not inflamed with Gods loue. For thy voyce is milde and gentle, being the grones of a Turtle, not the clamours of a murmurer. And thence I draw my confidence, that you shall not fayle to find him, whom you lament as lost.

2 But yet I must aske you, what you say of him, whose absence you so much deplore. Is he good, or els doe you entertayne some other opi-



nion of him?

*Phil.* Yes indeede he is good, and exceeding good ; he is iust , and faithfull, nor is there any iniquitie in him, may it is euen impossible there should be any.

*Theo.* Why doe you therfor grieue concerning a Good, wherein there is no guile.

*Phil.* My sorow is not about a Good, in that it is Good. But I bewaile my selfe because I am a miserable wretch, for that I haue lost a good and faithfull friend. Tis I, tis I that haue deserued it: yet alas! alas that I haue not carefully conserued his grace, I haue learn't by the losse of him, what I had in possessing him. The absence of my beloued shewes me, what happines I inioyed by his presence. I was wonderfull ioyous and ioconde with him, but I was not cautious enough of his speedie departure.

He came springing in the moun-

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taines being pleasant and merrie in the gates of my house. And presently I shutt the doores of the flesh, and conducted my Beloued vnto me. I satt downe with him, and reposed vnder his shadowe, sheltering my selfe from showres and tempests. And I was glad when I looked vpon my Beloued.

And why should I not be glad? For he is my ioy, and the exultation of my hart. Ah what had I then, and what did I possesse at that houre? I am not able to expresse vnto thee, how well it was with me. Nor is it now expedient to declare it. I could euen wishe for no more, while he was present whom I loued alone.

3. O how greatly I loued him, when I neglected my selfe and all thinges? I made but litle or no esteeme of any thinge which could delight me, because I was wholly transported with his loue. And what

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soeuer was not his very selfe, seemed strange and vnsauourie vnto me.

Who being taken from me, my hart appeared, in a manner, to be wrested out of my body. To witt my soule depended vpon his grace, because I had no other comfort, blit himselfe alone, whose departure I now bewayle.

He was sufficient for me, yea abundantly enough to procure me all varieties of delight. He was enē to me such as I wished. And what euer he imposed vpon me, I willingly accepted and I readily and totally gaue my selfe ouer to him. There was an vnanimous consent, and much tranquillitie betwixt vs.

Nor durst any interrupt our silence Because he comanded with his owne mouth that so it should be: *I adiure you ô daughters of Ierusalem, by the Roes, and the Harts of the field, that you rayse not, nor make*

*the Beloued to awake, untill her selfe will.*

Now waigh diligently, if you haue any sencie of my words, how greatly I must needes lament the absence of my Beloued, by whose presence I began to abounde with all blessings.

*Theo.* To this I replied. I am sensible of what you say, I haue learned by frequent experience what you speake. Yet let vs comfort our selues in this, that the disposition of his blessed will, is the aduancement of our deuotion.

And what thou hast already said I thankfully receiue, yet I desire to heare the same thinges more fully: for slow capacities haue neede of a more ample declaration.

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CHAP. XV.

*A search made upon the Beloued, and of the giftes of his grace.*

1. Ph. **B**lessed be God who remembres not his misery from me.

Theo. I am present againe then, seeking by a pious scrutinie, how you behaue your selfe, when your Beloued chāceth to leaue you without inward cōsolation. And desire to know what aduise you haue to giue me in this behalfe. As also what meanes you vse to procure his returne, and reconcilement.

I beseech thee (ô thou dearest deuout Christian soule) conceale none of these thinges from me which I come to inquire about. You may now much profit me, if you lay open

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what you piously thinke. Out of your words I may take the measure of myne owne sorowe, whether it were reasonable or not.

For I haue obserued you sometymes merrie, and sometymes sadd, and then againe I haue seene you reioyceing; and in you I haue a litle made reflection of my selfe.

And I haue conceiued the departure and returne of your Beloued to haue bene the chiefe cause of such your change. In which case vnderstanding that you had run through fundrie vicissitudes, I drew neere to be informed.

2. *Phit.* To which the answered Giuing way to your desire, I will endeavour, in some sort, to discouer, what passeth in my hart, as well when I am with the Beloued, as when being wayned from him, I am left a lone, in expectation of him whom my soule loues.

And in the first place I would

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haue you to know this, that his absence brings me as much bitterness and sorowe, as his grace afforded me ioy and sweetnesse. But why the pleaseth so to dispose, I had rather you tooke it from himselfe then from me.

And you shall heare him, as soone as I haue finished my present taskes: for then, in the last place, we will bring him in with vs, and sitting in the midst of vs, he will teach vs the order he vses to obserue with the Loueing soule.

But for the present heare me with patience, and let not my poore imperfect speech be offensive to you. For the ayme of our meeting together was to excite one anothers hart; that we might equally sorow together, or, through loue, equally reioyce. Woe to him that is all alone, if he fall into any sorow or temptation, for he hath none to releiue him.

Wheras, being two together, they mutually solace one another, while when the one is sad, the other brings consolation: or if he admitt of no comfort, he affords him compassion, and begins to take a large shart in his friends sorow. Whence it comes to passe that they either mutually reioyce, or they comfort themselves in their mutuall teares in point of their lost ioy.

And though sorrowe still remayne in aduersitie, and deplorable cases, yet are they more patient and moderate, because they finde themselves vnanimous; so that though thinges change, yet their hartes can neither be changed, nor corrupted.

Who would not say, (considering the singular contentment and faithfull agreement of their hartes) *Lo how good and pleasant it is, that brethren should liue together.*

3. I can therfor more freely deliver the sense of my harte vnto thee



because I neither feare craft, nor captiuousnesse in thee.

Behold then: This my most deare spouse and most beloved friend, my Lord Iesus Christ, the Louer of holy soules, pressed by loue was not able to abstayne from drawing me a miserable catife vnto him; and whilst I yet was not, he gaue me being, life, and vnderstanding, and the fruition of this comon light. He gaue me also the happinesse to be regenerated by Baptisme; and he clothed me with the glorie of his merites.

And then when I had disuigoured my selfe with many sinnes, and was incapable to render loue for loue, he looked not vpon my vncleanesse, but vpon the bosome of his owne mercyes.

For while I was yet straying further from him, he called me backe by his grace, not permitting me to perish in this world.

But this is not true repose; nor is this habitation, vnder the shadowe of the Beloued, of any longe continuance. But that is true rest which we take in our countrie, after the labours of this present life.

Yet to see ones selfe freed from the heauie chaynes of this world, and to be alreadie in a condition where one may more fully serue the Beloued, and attend to him and ones selfe, in secrete silence, is a certaine delightfull entertaynement to a soule that aspires after God.

4. Nor was he yet wanting in my fundrie necessities, assisting me in my prime and principall temptations.

Oft did he also instruct me with profitable speeches, confirming me by his wordes.

And as tender young plantes, are wont to be watered with showres: so he watered me with interiour consolations, least young springing

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And he said vnto me, if thou dost desire it indeede, and wilt giue care vnto me, thou shalt see all Good. If thou dost effect what I commande, thou shalt be my friend: If thou makest choyce of me, and louest me aboue all thinges; my father will grant thee what soeuer thou shalt demande.

But if you forsake me, it will proue a greate hindrance to you, and I will imploye my zeale against you.

And when you seeke to place your affection vpon some other thinge, it will not longe please you, but will proue irkesome and bitter to you, because, *I am the saluation and liſe of the soule.*

And I turned my selfe to him whom I had found my benefactour: and shaking off the dust of terrene affection, I resolued firmly in my hart, to liue henceforth wholly to

him: because there is nothing better then he, nor can any more advantageous bargaine be made.

5. Let such as haue a mynd runn abrode to seeke some other whom they might loue and serue; As for my part it is euident enough to me that he is the true husband of my soule indeede, for whom it were not hard to dye, that I might alwayes adheare to his loue.

I stucke to him then, (for indeede he pleased me,) nor could I meete with a better. For my hart had most earnestly sett it selfe vpon such an one; as had none greater, none better, nor more worthy then he, and with all, such an one as abounded with all kind of Blessings.

And wheras he was wonderfull sweete and mylde, he added words of consolation to his other blessings, carefully prouiding that none should deterre and breake me with too much austeritie and hardnesse;

but that they should rather teache  
and inioyne me what was sweete  
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loue, which was but yet weake and  
tender, might the better be drawne  
on, and more powerfully be borne  
towards the Beloued, without re-  
lenting.

He will be better instructed and  
profit more, saith he, if he be freely  
allured on, not forced by cōpulsion.  
He will more easily submit his necke  
to my yoake, if loue inuite him ra-  
ther by rewards, then if feares should  
terrifie him with punishments.  
Howbeit if he should neede spuring  
let it be done with a discrete mode-  
ration, least by violence he might be  
oppressed.

For he knew what was fitting for  
plantes newly sett; and what aduan-  
tage that pietie of his was afterwards  
to bring me, especially in tyme of  
temptation; since I might easily call  
to mynd how greate it was towards

me in the beginning, and that ther-  
for I should not fayle in the fight.

Nor would he presently discouer  
to me what I was after wardes to  
suffer in his seruice; but euer and  
annone he mixed sorrowes with  
ioyes, hauing an eye to the imbecil-  
litie and incapacitie of a new sprin-  
ging budd, till I grew vp to a capa-  
citie to endure hard thinges.

6. Then he conducted me all vpp  
and downe, he instructed me, and  
bore me vpon his shoulders. He  
leade me all through holy writte,  
and armed me with sacred fire  
against the iniquitie of the Diuelli.

He proposed to me the Mirours  
of all vertues, to witt the holy Pa-  
triarkes and Prophetes, together  
with the lightes of the new Testa-  
ment.

He leade me also through the  
wildernesse, and the Tabernacles  
of Egypt, where the glorious name  
of Monkes and Cenobites began

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to gett footing and increase, whole holy example made it both imitable and credible how sweete our Lord yoake was, and withall how bitter and deceiptfull the brode way of the world.

He taught me as a mother doth her tender babe, craking me spirituall nuts, and putting the kirkels into my mouth, because they were pleasing to the palate.

Areade if you can what they may meane, and where they may be found. Open the Apostlicall booke, and casting your eyes vpon it, read, if you be capable of so high Misteries. Turne ouer the Prophete Isaye, looke into the Gospell, the light of all lightes, and marke whether they produce not most delicious kirkells.

What foetter you meete withall therin obscure and hard to be vnderstoode, is a kirkell in the shell. But when you come to heare it ex-

pounded, and vnderstand what before you could not, the nutt shell is craked, and the kinnell waxeth sweet to your hart. Iudge in like manner of other subtile sentences. And so you will meete with as many nutts, as hidden senses.

7. And how doe you thinke he carried me vpon his shouldeers? He did it as often as he beheld my infirmities, and yet neither reiected nor despised me, but indured me with patience and longanimity.

He bore me also vpon his shouldeers, when he inspired others and gaue them strength to support myne infirmities, and what euer was reprehensible in me.

But he bore me yet vpon his shouldeers much more dearely, when bearing his Crosse vpon his backe he went out to the Mount Caluarie, where he was also crucified. For there he rather bore me then the Crosse it selfe.



And the loade of my sinnes  
waighed heauier, vpon his shoul-  
ders, then the verie woode of the  
Crosse. For it was for me that he  
bore that Crosse, not for himselfe.  
Howbeit it deserued to be venera-  
ted and honored for his sake who  
bore it, and dyed vpon it.

But how farre ought he to be ve-  
nerated and loued aboue all thinges,  
by whose merite and grace I was so  
sought and redeemed?

That Beloued shall therefore be as  
deare to me, as an onely child to his  
mother.

And I verie well knew, that I was  
noe wayes answerable to his loue,  
yet all the presumption I vsed was  
caused by his graciousnesse. Nor  
was it fitt, that, while he behaued  
himselfe so familiarly with me, I  
should not run into his dearest im-  
bracementes.

I haue fteshe in memorie what  
Dauid said: *who am I that, I should*

*be the son-in-law of a kinge?*

And yet this is a farre greater affinitye the that: because this is a sincere and virginall alliance, wherein flesh and bloud had no hand, but vnspotted faith, and the demande of a good conscience to God. Whereof that Disciple whom Iesus much loued, said: He who is in vs, is greater, then he who is in the world. For God is Charitie and he brings forth this alliance.

VVheras Dauid therfor so greatly humbles himselfe, that he might become the son-in-law of a terrene Kinge, what an humble conceipt ought I to putt on, that our Lord the Kinge of Kinges daignes to owne me a poore miserable creature, and to drawe me to his loue.

I p. He dealt not with me therfor, as I deserued, but as it pleased his most beneuolent goodnes, as in all thinges it seemed most fitt to his charitie and infinite Bountie.

Happie thrice happie that soule  
which is chayned in the bands of di-  
uine loue. How noble and inge-  
nuous she is, who is noe stranger to  
the desires of so blessed a coniu-  
ction!

And now whereas we haue stayed  
longe vpon the commendations of  
the Beloued, and yet haue not de-  
clared what you desired, let that  
declaration follow in order, which  
I beseech him to make delightfull  
and profitable vnto vs.

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CHAP. XVI.

*Of the Beloued's gracious pro-  
tection. and of the soules  
sufferinge.*

1. **A**S the eyes of the hande-  
mayde in the hand of her  
Mistresse, so my eyes are allwayes  
turned towards the Beloued. From

the tyme I began to loue him, I desired continually to perseuer with him.

Which hauing resolved in my selfe, he was pleased to approue and confirme it, saying: *He that remaynes in me and I in him brings forth much fruite.* But that the force of my lone might be tryed, how true, how stronge and how pure it might be, it was necessarie that temptation should make it appeare. Nor could I be tempted but by his permission, and absence for a tyme.

And wheras temptation vseth much to conduce to the purging of the interiour man, to a greater advancement in vertue, and to the clearer vnderstanding of spirituall giftes, it layd hand vpon me, and began to exercise me.

How violently and how frequently it tossed me too and fro, he, from whom no secreete lyes hidd, my Lord

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my God best knowes. He is the witness of all that passed in my hart. And euen now he lookes vpon me, and knowes me to be no other thinge then a frayle peece of earth.

2. If he had not then assisted me when I was so greucously assaulted, that I scarcely conceiued I liued, my soule had bene neere to haue dwelt in Hell, as being fallen downe into the pitt of desparation.

But he that is wont to assiste those that are troubled in hart, was mercifull vnto me. For who would be able to endure so many tribulations, vnlesse God did protect and helpe him?

That I was therfor able to subsiste before the face of this tempeste, was a worke of mercy. And that I am yet able to stand constant, springs from the same sourse of pietie.

An hece it is that I a not to, confide in my selfe as longe as I liue in this house of flesh. Let the sun shine neuer so

faire vpon vs, I doe not now apprehend any securitie. For on a foundaine the ayre will be troubled, and happily euen then when we least imagine it.

Therfor so much more is the grace and protection of my beloved necessarily required, by how much more I am taught by experience that in a manner all things ly open to danger.

In noe place is securitie sane in Heauen alone, where my beloved feedes his Elect in ioy and exultation.

3. But when shall we be there? What am I able to discouer of that happie abode? Scarce are we able euen to frame any obscure concept of it. Much lesse are we in tearmes to enter into it.

I would to God he himselfe would come, and place me in the most replendant secure and pleasant scate of the saintes pastures, where neither the Diuell hath entrie, nor  
may

for any euill encounters are met  
with.

I am as yet tossed at sea, not  
knowinge whether I shall arrive  
at the Harbour of saluation, by rea-  
son of the multitude of temptations  
swelling with contrarie windes.

There is therfore no securitie for  
me. Yet still am I armed with this  
sute and buckler: that alwayes see  
the light of Faith: that I humbly  
beseege Gods grace: that I repose an  
vntwearied hope in him: that I doe  
not at all consent to be separated  
from his Charitie: that finally I  
rather giue my selfe over to his pro-  
vidence and the Abyss of his mer-  
cy, then to myne owne industrie.

Werfore though I stumble at  
euery stepp, and sometyme fall into  
sinne, yet I must not despaire, but  
instantly weepe and crye vnto him.  
O my Lord my God haue mercy  
on my soule, and permitt me not to  
be endangered by my temptations,

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but faithfully ayde me, that I may  
vallyently resiste, and ouercome.

Stretch out thy right hand to the  
worke of thy hands, thou who  
cryest me by the Diuell, and often  
placest me at thy left hand.

If I be assaulted by so greuous a  
temptation, that I shall not be able  
to cry for helpe to our Lord, I will  
presently from the bottome of my  
hart sigh after him. For *he knoweth*  
*the secretes of the hart*; and what the  
spirit ardently desires: for it is not  
his will that one of those litle-ones  
perish who belecue in him.

4. O how greate is his mercy to  
me, euen whilst I know it not, or at  
least reflect not, that he is with me  
in tribulation!

For he often tymes conserued me  
that I might not be deliuered ouer  
to my passions. Sometymes againe  
I was permitted to fall by his se-  
crete iudgement, and to be ouer-  
come in smale thinges, least I might

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waxe proud and presumtuons in greate matters; but being humbled and confused, I might learne, that I was euen then nothing too, when I seemed to stand firme, and be in prosperitie.

Doe not therfor, I beseech you prayse me rashly and before the tyme, though I seeme to goe prosperously forward: but rather reserue prayses to my happie end: may rather prayse not me at all, but our Lord. Let the God of glorie be praysed alone, who was often present to me in my temptations.

Betause I was often caught by them, he mercefully deliuered me; sometymes too when he descouered that they came as a storme to beare me quite downe, he sent out his arrowes and dissipated them: he multiplyed thunder, and confounded them.

And they left me for a tyme: for, to be free from them for good and

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all, he iudged not fitt: being a blessing which he rarely bestowed vpon any of his saintes in their life-tyme.

After those assaultes therfor I had a litle rest, my Beloued blessing me with peace, which yet when I had obteyned, I gaue not my selfe to temporall or secular quiete, but applied my selfe to the quiete of mynde, that I might behold the earth a farre off, and begin a litle to looke vnto Heauenly secretes.

I began therfor carefully to studie my selfe, and to endeouour to find out the meanes wherby I might best please him, who had shewen me so many signes of his loue, farre exceeding my desertes.

For I could not discouer in the temptation, how delightfull my Beloued was, but onely in the calme of my mynde, and in the quiete of my solitude.

And I desired with all my endeouour without intermission this

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peacefull calme, that I might more perfectly adheare and attend vnto him, without interruption or disturbance.

6. But the effects of grace doe not alwayes seconde the desires of our hart. But some tymes desired sweetnesse is granted : sometymes againe; tis iustly differred.

For to whom is it not more desiredly deare to repose vnder the shaddowe of the Beloued, so it were granted, and were suteable to tyme and place.

But now my Beloued mutually workes with me. Nor doe I alwayes feele disturbance, nor continually enioy delight, but euening and morning make vp one day, because all this mortall life is spent in going and coming, through subiects of ioy and sorrow.

That sainte had more then sufficiently experienced it who sayd.

*Thou hast visite him arely in the*

*morning, and suddenly thou tryest him.*

Yet if our temptation be either of a short continuance, or not verie importune and violent, it seemes at least some kind of repose.

When therfor I am blessed with the happines sweetely to repose in my Beloued, though in neuer so smale a measure, it is acceptable to me, and affordes me my harts desire In this I reioyce, and will alwayes reioyce in so heauenly a gift.

7. And wheras he so often preuented me with his gracious visitation, he gaue me further confidence to speake to him vpon all occasions.

For when he comes vnto, and pleaseth to passe a holy-day with me, a sudden light shines to my hart, in whose presence the mist of all idle cogitations doth vanish, and the long wished calme is inioyed.

For vpon his entrie, euery vn-

fearely and fithle thing doth depart;  
because he is the louer and infuser of  
puritie: yes all the illusions of the  
diuell, with the pompes and vani-  
ties of the world must necessarily  
paeke away.

Therfor all the passions and  
temptations which I endured being  
suppressed, I began to know him  
more clearly, and more fervently to  
loue him. And I earnestly endeuou-  
red to render him thanks that be-  
pleased at length to repress the tu-  
multuous insurrections of vice.

For that is it which still vses to  
disturbe my peace, and striue to  
stoppe my mouth, that I might not  
speake to my Beloued.

But their endeuours are of no  
force against his power and wis-  
dome, who in the midst of the greatest  
tumult, findes an easie entrie into my  
hart, and silently infuses his secre-  
tes into it, so that I contemne all  
their suggestions, may I euen take

noe notice of them at all.

8. O my most cordiall and beautifull Beloued, take me thus into thy protection I beseech thee, as often as thou seest my affection overcharged with the waight of vice, or held prisoner in frivolous imployments, least I might begin to wander after the troupes of ill thoughts, and suddenly be deprived of thy grace, without which I am not able to continue in thy long searched-for friendship.

For thou art my Lord and my God, who salues and sanctifies all thinges by thy word, who hath put my soule in life and hast not giuen my feete to be moued, but hast deliuered me from a wicked tyme, and from the snares of death.

O howe many haue bene abandoned, and haue perished, who were more Innocent then my selfe. *Blessed Lord* therefore, *o my soule,* and all thinges that are within

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me blesse his holy name. Blesse thou  
my soule, our Lord, and forget not  
all his retributions.

What soeuer thou canst say, or  
thinke, or promesse, in his prayse, is  
but litle, yea too too litle: for he is  
greater when all prayse, and sweeter  
then any harmonic.

For this cause my soule doth  
cleue vnto thee, and loues thee  
aboue all thy giftes; though that  
which out of this charitie thou sen-  
dest me, be both faire and delicious.

Because thou alone art the spouse;  
the rest are presentes, and tokens  
of loue.

Let me not loue them in lieu of  
thee, nor beleue that all things  
without thee can suffice me, least  
I might inioye thee also together  
with them.

Thou permittest vs to vse many  
things for thy honours sake, but  
thou allowest vs not to inioy any  
thing in steede of thee.

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Therfor, my Beloued spouse Iesus Christ, I prefered thee before all thinges, and studied to loue thee aboue all thinges. Grant me therfor happily to inioy thee, and eternally to be blessed with thee in a permanent vnion.

But whither am I run? I haue happly drawen thee further then thou desiredst. For the loue of my cheife and onely friend hath a litle transported me. And I wish to God, he would hereafter still more and more transport me, and draw thee also with me. May his goodnes prouide vs a heauenly ascension, but let vs the while imbrace an humble descension or abaisement.

Dost thou demande whether I am sometymes left by the Beloued? I answer yes.

*Theo.* How dost thou behaue thy selfe the while?

*Phil.* I compose my selfe with as much indifferencie as possibly I may



and expect his returne. By nature I am afflicted but interioarly comforted in mynde, least my sorrow might grow past consolation and vncomfortable.

I call to mynd that one cannot liue in loue without sorrow. I liue by faith. I beleue the scriptures. I yeild assent to words of comfort.

And though as yet it goes but poorely with me, yet I distrust not but all may goe better, nor ought I distrust. For what is deliuered by holy saintes is true and vnchangable. For they too were excercised in many difficulties, and tryed in thinges of the like nature.

Nature desires alwayes to be eased of her burthen, and seekes to be comforted in something. But my spirit is readie to endure all thinges that God permitts to fall vpon me.

If therfor I chance to be more

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indebted and slow to performe good thinges, my wound is not ther- for desperate. Though he should kill me, saith the Iuste, I will hope in him. If it be vertue that I loue, Pa- tience is a greater one: let it be pra- ised then, euen in this occasi on especially.

The difficultie of the worke, often adds to the excellencie of the vertue. And that vertue may be tryed, and become more illustrious, it is vsually exercised by contrarie suc- cesses.

If then you be ouertaken with such a tryall, doe not distrust nor fayle in point of courage. But haue patience and cōmend Gods iustice; God is not so seuer and mercilesse, as to suffer thee to remayne long dis- consolate. Take heede onely of im- moderate groife, and of murmuring against him who is iust and holy; because thou art left, least the wic- ked spirit suggests sharper tempta-

tions in point of faith, and blasphemie; and through too much time-rousellesse be more afflicted then is fitting.

Therefore endure thy selfe a while with patience, and repress thy greife, be the heauinesse of hart or body which presse in vpon thee, neuer so greate.

Remayne constant in the good purpose, which from the beginning thou didst resolue to obserue: For it is verie conducing, especially in such a coniuncture; to cast thy whole confidence vpon the Beloued.

Expect heavenly consolation with patience. Thou shalt suddenly feele heavenly grace, and God will looke back vpon thee. For loe you haue a faithfull witnesse saying to you: *Expecting* I haue expected our Lord and he hath bene propitious to me.

But that you may speedily deserue

to obtayne him, pray frequently, in the interim, and beseech others to pray for you. And so committ your selfe intirely to his blessed will and disposall, that he may deale with you according to his holy pleasure.

And say to him with much confidence: my tymes are in thy hands. Thou knowest how it fares with me, thou knowest what I suffer, and now if thou wilt, I shall quickly be comforted.

Yet be that alwayes done which is right and agreeable in thy sight, and be mercifull vnto me a poore desolate begger, who humbly grone vnto thee.

If therefore you perseuere in patience and longanimitie, and swarue or decline not frō the faith and charitie which is in Christ Iesus, for a smale tribulation, infallibly the light of his grace will returne vnto you, and he will more plentifully

inlighten you.

And the Beloued returning, will proue much more deare to you then though he had neuer absented himselfe.

For his word is not past recalling, nor is he so highly offended that he cannot be reconciled. He will be appeased presently and most eaily, so you endeuour to be more cautious, and promesse to doe satisfaction more speedily.

If you acquiesce to these wholesome admonitions, the Beloued will be to you what he was formerly, and you will be reioyced by his presence, and will say: How greate is the multitude of thy sweetenesse which thou hast layd vp for these that feare thee.

O Sion thou shalt be renewed, and thou shalt behold thy soueraigne one who is about to raigne in thee. He is the king of vertues, and thy Beloued. *whose hinder partes of his backe*

*in the palenesse of gold. But his head  
is of the finest gold.*

Be this said in short for thy consolation. But the rest of that which I promised thee, touching the Beloued's change: to witt, how he now appeares, and presently againe disappeares, thou shalt receiue and heare from his owne mouth in the ensuing discourse.

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### CHAP. XVII.

*Of the Beloued's answere, what  
might be the reason of his  
departure.*

*The soule and the Beloued.*

1. **T***Hy workes are mervelous  
and my soule knoweth excee-  
dingly.*

*Phil.* What may be the reason, O my Beloued, that thou didst treat

me so? and why hast thou forsaken me? Please to answer me. Thou lefst me and wentst thy way. But yet thou didst returne againe. And herin thou didst graciously. If thou hadst not quickly come, I had almost fainted.

But being conscious of the secrettes of my hart, thou tookest compassion on me. To witt I was sorrowfull vpon thy departure, but now I am comforted at thy returne.

Yet daigne to tell me some thing for myne instruction. What pleasure dost thou take to run to and fro and afflict me? Art thou delighted to heare vs crye? *Staye with vs, O Lord, because it groweth late.*

Come and sitt in the midst betwixt vs, for here am I, and a certaine other Disciple of thyne, who haue a desire to heare thee, and we beseech thee to instruct vs.

Say boldly what pleaseth thee, and

addresse thy words to me, I heare none so wilingly speake as thy selfe. And if any speake for thee, while thou speakest in him, his speech shall be welcome to me, and shall willingly be heard.

Thy words shall be sweeter to me then honie, and the honie-combe. For they farre exceede all other delights. Let thy voyce now sound in my eares.

2. The voyce of my Beloued then did sound, and said: I am he who speake iustice. Who is like to me in counsell and prudence? Who created the sea, and the dry land? I am the Lord framing light, and creating darknesse.

Who diued into the Abyссе, and drew water from the bottome? I am the Lord searching the hart and reynes. Who hath knowne all old and new thinges?

I am the Lord who made all thinges in number, waight, and mea-



sure. I am the Creatour of Heaue  
and earth. The gouernour of all  
ages.

I the knower of secretes, and the  
Reuealour of hidden Misteries, I  
imbrace all thinges, and inwardly  
know the causes of all thinges. I am  
God, and I am not changed; with  
whom the nature and condition of  
all mutable thinges remayne immu-  
table.

I am the Almighty God whose  
power cannot be subdued: I am the  
most high, whose hight cannot be  
reached vnto. I am Godnes whose  
being cannot be comprehended.

I am the most present and secrete:  
I the most interiour, and furdest re-  
moued from the senses.

I beare all thinges without bur-  
den, I gouerne all without dissen-  
tion. I behold all thinges past and to  
come, as thinges present.

I farre excelle all corporall and  
spirituall creatures. I am called by

diuerſe names. Yet can no humane cogitation truly represent me.

I appeare on a ſudden, and am hidde againe before one be aware. I am truly the hidden God, and I treat and diſpoſe of all affaires with my beloved, in a thouſand ſundrie wayes.

3. And I foretold the louing ſoule, euen theſe verie thinges, ſaying: *I will hide my face from her for a while. I will leaue her for a moment, that I may ſee whether ſhe loue purely indeede.*

It is a great matter to loue purely; becauſe this is not to loue me for ones owne ſake: nor for any temporall commoditie, or ſpirituall conſolation, but me, and her ſelfe too, for my owne ſake, and for no reward that ſhe hopes for from me.

All men are not in a capacitie to loue me thus. But this prerogatiue of pure loue, is peculiar to the moſt perfect ſoule onely.

But she that is yet imperfect, must be often tryed and pushed forward, that she may learne the measure of her owne loue, whether it extende to the contempt of her selfe.

Thou saydst often in thy hart, I truly loue: and thou dost frequently repeate the same, saying: I loue. But I giue no credit to more words or thoughtes, but I will trye thee in verie deede.

4. When I am present with thee, and careffe thee: when I bestow deuotion vpon thee, or increase that which is already giuen: when I present, for the most part, pleasant and prosperous thinges: then thou sayst deuoutly: my Beloued, I loue thee. And its well said: for I am indeede wonderfull amiable, and all that can be said, or thought of me, are sweete and amiable, and worthy to be prayfed for euer more.

But what greate matter is it to loue and prayse me in benefits

onely? Euen sinners doe as much. For they often blesse me when they receiue that which they desire to their losse. But prayse is not gracefull in the mouth of the sinner.

He therfor that loues me for some benefit or consolation, what doth he more then the couetous man? Aduance, aduance, and ascende to thinges of more perfection.

Be sorie to remayne alwayes fainte and remisse. Learne to cate solide foode, and not still to liue of milke like children.

Be of the number of those stronge ones of Dauid, who still haue their speare, their sword and sheild in their handes. Take vp thy Crosse and follow me, Endeavour with speede to be counted amongst them, who for my sake are accustomed to suffer diuers aduersities, and sundrie sortes of exile.

Thou art too much addicted to consolation. I must trye thee therfor

and incline thee to the other side, that thou mayst see by experience what thou art able to endure, least thou mightst otherwise appeare innocent and holy in thyne owne eyes.

I will send vpon my seruantes tribulation, wroth, and indignation, and immissions by euill Angells.

Some shall take away what is thyne; others shall refuse thee what thou standst in neede of. Some shall vse detraction against thee; and others shall oppenly resiste thee in thy face. Some shall putt heauie loades vpon thee, others shall afflict the outwardly, others inwardly. Some shall be rayfed vp to an honorable condition, while thou shalt be exposed to contumelies and troubles.

Thou shalt be tryed in all these and greater matters, as a valiant champion. I will depart from thee,

yet will I not omitt diligently to examine thee, to see whether thou wilt curse me in my face.

But if thou louest me with thy whole hart, and at all tymes blesse my name; then thou shalt be worthily stiled my Spouse, and shalt haue a priuate chamber with me.

But if thou canst not yet endure my rodde, but apprehendest this discipline too sharpe, bewayling my absence for a many dayes, which thou desirest with affection and diligence, I will send thee my staffe that thou mayst ryse vp: and then I will come, and thou shalt be ray sed and restored to thy former grace againe.

I will not haue thee wholly to faine, because I loue one that loues me. And though thou dost not as yet perfectly loue, yet I despise not a litle one, but I will haue a care that thou maist grow vp to't, I haue a care that all may succcede well with thee

thee. I will not therfor that thou  
harbourst any ieaiousies of me.  
I am not ignorant what thou  
art able to suffer, and thence it is  
that I moderate my impositions,  
least thou mightest be tempted  
aboue thy strength, and so fainte  
under the burden.

If I chance to make some delay  
expect me till the day of my visita-  
tion. I will speedily come, and sa-  
tisfie my promesse. But as for thee,  
applie thy self earnestly to prayer,  
be attentue to the reading of holy  
thinges; and haue patience, and  
forbearance in all.

Nor am I ignorant that thou art  
in sorrow the while. But that thou  
shouldst so soone proue fainte-  
hearted, and quite loose all hope, as  
though I were neuer to returne  
again, doth not indeede please me.  
Where is thy faith?

Thou hast neede of a greater faith,  
especially in this occurrence: be-

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cause though thou seest not me, yet  
thou art seene by me, to whom thou  
shouldst entrust thy selfe and all  
thou hast.

For albeit thou understandst not  
my iudgements, yet firme faith  
putts downe for certaine, that all  
God's dispositions and workes are  
good.

I comfort thee therefore, because  
this infirmie is not mortall, but  
for Gods glorie. I tooke from thee  
thyne owne desire, and I had a  
mynde to try thy faith and Cha-  
ritie.

For all this I did, that thou  
mightst more clearly know thyne  
owne infirmie, and better vnder-  
stand my goodnesse.

Thou didst not know thy selfe  
thoroughly, as I did. I know both  
thee thy selfe and all that belongs  
to thee, not in tyme onely but froth  
eternitie.

Acknowledge then what asse-



stance thou haste from me : see how poore thou art of thy selfe or whats thyrie, being once left by me. Thou art not yet come to the perfect knowledge of thy selfe, and whereas it is of greate importance that thou shouldst know it, I thought good thou shouldst learne it by experience.

It is expedient for thee to be sometimes in desolation, to be afflicted with tribulations, to be humbled; that you thou mayst more manifestly touch with thy finger, as it were, thyne owne infirmitie.

I knew this came more home to thy aduantage. If hereby thou be made more prudent, and carefull in euery respect, what hast thou lost by it: thou are comonly arrogant and ascribing too much to thy selfe, not knowing thy selfe, apprehending that thou haste that good, which indeed thou haste not.

6. Selfe loue deceiues thee. And

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whilst thou thinkest not of the Gi-  
uer, thou abusest the gift. T'was I  
who made thee drinke with delight;  
but thou forgotst that the bunch of  
grapes was of my vineyard.

Try thy selfe now by experience.  
Acknowledge how little strength  
thou hast. If what thou hadst were  
from thy selfe, why didst thou not  
keepe it? But if thou couldst not  
so much as keepe it, confesse that  
thou hadst it from aboue.

Giue honour to grace therfore,  
and cōfesse that without me you are  
able to doe nothing. Consider how  
necessarie I am for you, how suffi-  
cient, and powerfull alone to confir-  
me you in euery good thinge.

Where were you but in sinne be-  
fore I called you? And where are  
you euen yet but where I leade you?  
Nay how had you euer content and  
happinesse without me?

7. And I replied; neuer truly my  
most sweete Lord and Master. Thou

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alone art my onely singularly deare  
delight. Thou that in all occasions  
art a farre more faithfull friend then  
any other.

Why did you then harbour in  
your hart some vnworthy thoughtes  
of runing after I know not what  
strange Louers? What didst thou  
discouer disagreeable in me? could  
my glorie or beautie offend thee?

Nay in good sooth, & Lord, there  
is none cōparable to thee in beautie  
and glorie; in riches and power:  
none like to thee in heauen nor in  
earth.

For thou alone art the highest  
about all creatures. Thyne are the  
heauens; and the earth is thyne: the  
round earth, and the fulnesse therof  
thou hast founded.

Thou hast bestowed maruelous  
endowments vpon thy creatures,  
wherin thy wonderfull beautie, wis-  
dome and goodnes doe shine. Yet  
amongst them all, there is nothing

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that enters into any comparison with thyne owne glorious presence. Now I haue learnt by a sad experience that it was a bitter cup for me, to haue abandoned thy presence though but for a moments space.

8. Returne vnto me therefore saith thy Beloued. Thou hast already wandered abroad sufficiētly. Learn to be myld and stable; to hope and be confident in me, not so much in the day of my visitation, as principally in the night of temptation.

I let thee wander abroad, that being wearied, thou shouldst the sooner returne to me againe; and being frustrated of exterior conso- lation, thou mightest at length vnderstand what aduantages thou hadst by my loue, which so often in- uited thee.

And therefore now obserue (nor is it without reason) that thou art often relinquished; left without fer- uour and deuotion; thou art trea- dious to thy selfe; thou art wearied

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with temptations; that thou art afflicted on all sides; that thou meetest with no aduise, nor feelest assistance; but endurest anxietie of mynde and want of comfort euery where.

Therefore I leaue thee, that thou mightest learne thereby how necessary my presence is for thee: and that too, not in one thing onely, or in matters of greatest importance, but even in euery action, in euery tyme and place, as well aely in the morning as late at night, whereuer thou art, goest, or remainest.

For so we are instructed to walke carefully with our beloued; to abstaine from vanities, and to auoyd all offence.

8. I leaue thee that thou mayst know how much thou louest me; that is, that the measure of thy loue may appeare vnto thee. Thou didst apprehend thy selfe stronger and better then thou wast indeede; but as soone as my assistance was with

drawen a lide from thee, thou be-  
ganst clearly to discouer that thou  
wast truly poore and miserable.

How should thy loue be knowne  
but by thy patient sufferance of affli-  
ctions?

I obserue thee sometimes fallen  
into a coldnesse of deuotion, and  
therfor I hide my selfe for a tyme  
standing behind the wall like the  
Beloued, that thou mayst be excited  
to seeke me, with more seruour and  
diligence.

I see and know all thinges, but  
profitable experience giues many  
tymes, better vnderstanding. And if  
thou dost loue me indeede thou wilt  
not cease to seeke me. If I be de-  
lightfull to thee, thy care will be to  
find me out.

You are not ignorant, I hope,  
that riches purchaced with great  
paynes, are conserued with more  
care? Who doth so earnestly desire  
rest and repose, as the wearied pil-  
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grime? To whom is loue so delight-  
full, as to him that had first sorrowed  
for his Beloued? And is not our lost  
treasure, found againe with doubled  
ioyes? The sometymes intermitted  
presence of the beloued, brings a  
new increase of ioy and gladnesse.

I withdraw my selfe then profit-  
ably, because I doe it not out of  
any indignation; but I play in this  
sorte with the louing soule by a cer-  
taine pious dispensation. Let it suf-  
fice for the present, that thou hast  
bene admitted to heare me, though  
for neuer so litle a space.

In the interim I licence thee to  
haue recourse to me as oft as neede  
requires. I neuer shutt my bowells  
from any that sought me humbly,  
and in good earnest.

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## CHAP. XVIII.

*Of confidence in the diuine mercy.*

*The speakers are Theop.*

*Philothea & the Sponse.*

1. **M**Y God is my mercy, and therefore I am not confounded.

*Theo.* Let none conceiue it to be amisse if I desire to haue frequent conference with my Lord God; whose benignitie and mildnesse doth often draw on my sluggishnesse, and excite me to pray and meditate; so that not to complie with his call seemes to me a meere rudenesse and ingratitude.

But some happily may object against me, saying, nor dost euē thou then feare God, though thou art in very deede a vile sinner, and altogether vnworthy to breath. How comest thou to be so presumptuous?



And wherast thou art the least, and most despicable of all creatures; why doth thou yet intrude thy selfe to such diuine conferences?

2. My beloued Lord make answer for me, because the sinners mouth is open against me. If I should goe about to iustifie my selfe, myne owne mouth would condemne me. And whether I be free from spot or noe, my soule is ignorant. Thou knowest my foolishnesse, and my confusion. Doe thou speake, and I will most willingly be silent.

Sp. And loe the voyce of my beloued. Giue heare to the words of such as vpbraide thee, but rather attend to what I haue said: for he came not to call the iust, but the sinner. I pray you is it not lawfull to doe what I please? If I thinke fitting to gratifie thee, though thou be st the last of all, in some small measure, who will accuse me of sinne?

Let him, who is without sinne

throw the first stone at thee. Marick  
if they that reprehend thee be sin-  
ners too, why doe they detract from  
grace? Thou didst not make choyce  
of me, but it was my mercy which  
preuented thee.

20. Are some yet bold enough to  
murmure against thee, because thou  
dost resort to me? Certes he mur-  
mures not against thee, but plainly  
against me, for that I receiue sinners,  
and eate with them. And why, I pray  
shouldst thou not chalence a share  
in my familiaritie, which I rather  
bestow, with ioy, then withdraw it.

21. *Th.* To whom I replied. Beloued  
Lord, let it not be imputed to them  
but to my selfe and my finnes. I  
deny not the hard conceiptes they  
way make of me: nay I willingly con-  
fesse it, because they haue a iust  
ground for it then any one knowes.

22. *Sp.* He replied: It is happie  
for thee, that thou dost humble thy  
selfe; for so thou dost still gaine

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grownd, and shalt obtayne my grace  
with more facilitie. Yet thou art not  
to be cast away the while because  
thou art a sinner; how euer thou  
dost most iustly despise thy selfe  
ther vpon, and neuer forgettest the  
multitude of thyne offences.

Yet least thou shouldst pine away  
through too much anxietie, consider  
how of I make iust persons, and  
friends out of the number of sinners:  
making choyce of the humble, and  
abandoning those that presume of  
themselues.

I stand not in neede to be presen-  
ted with any thinge thats thyne.  
Onely this I desire at thy hands.  
Loue me with a pure hart, and it  
sufficeth.

*Theo.* To whom I said againe. Alas  
I am ashamed that there is no-  
thing in me, whereby thou mayst be  
drawen to loue me.

*Sp.* He replyes. I regarde not  
what the world presents to please

me; I require no such things. Love alone is sufficient, so it burne frequently and forsake me not.

Howbeit to whom, I pray, doe the things wherwith man is adorned, belonge? Are they not all myne, wherwith the hart and soule is beautified? But the things which belonge to the world, and grace the body, ought not to ingage thy hart at all.

Marrie in the ornaments of vertue thou art indeede concerned; and to those thou oughtest to attend, that thou mayst be pleasing in the sight of God in the light of the living.

Neuerthelesse thou didst but iustly humble and accuse thy selfe, as well to the cares of others, as to thyn owne hart, before the face of my Maiestie, truly confessing thyn infirmities, and deformities, and sighing from the verie bottome of thy hart, because thou art in no sort worthy to chalence to thy selfe the honour

of my friendshippe, eue for one moment. Because I am a Mirour without spott, and thou an impure sinner euen from thyne infancie.

Be still myndfull of thy frayle condition, and my generous and high state, and so approche confidently to me with an humble reuerence. For I am he who blottes out iniquities and offences; iustifies the wicked, pardoning him all his finnes, for my names sake.

4. Nor doe I onely impart these thinges, but I stand also prepared to bestow, still more and more, giftes of merey. For I chuse rather to show mercy then wroth, as being more desirous to pardon then punish.

Nay this seemes yet but litle to me, nor am I satisfied vnlesse to the first grace I adde the second and third; nay I putt no end to my mercyes, nor can the number of my graces, and benefits be expressed.

In a word, the sinne being once

pardoned, and penance and satisfaction being accomplished, I restore the ioy of my sauing countenance, by the infusion of a more abundant grace of the Holy Ghost.

And though the sinner be still detayned in flesh, yet I admitt him into my familiaritie so that there remaynes no shamefull cōfession for the sinnes formerly committed: but rather thākes giuing and prayse; because old scores are past ouer, and all is new againe.

I am so pious and mercifull, that I am alwayes more prone to pardon, then thou to repent: more readie to giue then thou to aske.

Why dost thou feare then? Why dost thou tremble and quake to approche to so pious a bosome? And why shouldst thou estrange thy selfe from my grace which is so freely offered?

Nay putt case thou didst know, that I had resolved to refuse, yet

wert thou not to desilte from asking  
or to loose confidence of being heard,  
but still to vrge more and more ve-  
hemently, till thou didst obtayne  
thy demande.

For my mercyes are infinite, and  
what at one tyme is denyed, at ano-  
ther may be graciously granted.

y. What dost thou know, but that  
at length I may turne my face to-  
wards thee, and grant thee thy  
harts desire? And what saith the  
Prophete of me? *Approche to him*  
saith he, *and he illuminated, and*  
*your faces shall not be confounded.*

I rather blame your coming too  
rarely, then your too frequent ac-  
cesse: and your temerous bashful-  
nesse, then your presumption of  
readie pardon.

To be confident of my goodnesse,  
is a signe of true humilitie, and a  
greate faith. These thinges I say  
that you should not offend, yet if  
you chance to offend, despaire not,

but ryse with speede: For you haue  
hope still, and an Advocate with  
the Father.

Do you expect to be made  
worthy before you approche? And  
when will that be I pray, of your  
selfe? If such onely as are good and  
worthy; such as are great and per-  
fect persons, must come vnto me,  
to whom shall sinners and publi-  
cans betake them selues? what  
doth the Gospell say then? *And  
Publicans*, saith it, *And sinners*  
*came to Iesus to heare him.*

Let therfor such as are vnworthy  
draw neere, that they may be made  
worthy. Let the wicked approche,  
that they may be made good. Let  
the litle and imperfect ones come  
that they may be rended great and  
perfect; let all and euery one come  
that they may drinke of the fulnesse  
of the fountaine of life.

I am the fontaine of life which can  
never be drayned. Let him that is

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thirstie come and drinke. And he  
that hath nothing, let him come  
and buy without money.

Let him who is sicke come to be  
cured. Let him that is luke-warne  
come to be inflamed. Let him that  
is pusilanimous come to be streng-  
thened. Let him that is sorrowfull  
come to be comforted. Let him that  
is drye in deuotion, come that he  
may be replenished.

Let him that is troubled with tea-  
diousnesse come and be recreated  
with ioy.

Loe it is my delight to be with the  
sonns of men. Let him that couets  
to be wise come to my doctrine, Let  
him that desires riches come to re-  
ceiue those which are eternall and  
incorruptible. Let him that brea-  
thes after honour come to inherite  
an eternall name in heauen.

Let him that desires felicitie come  
that he may possesse it without feare  
and danger. Let him that settis his

hart vpon the aboundance of all good thinges come to me that he may attayne vnto the cheife, eternall, and immense Good.

I am he who bestowes all temporall blessings, and ouer and aboue all temporall, giues also all eternall blessings in heauē: nor will I be wanting to my promesse, as soone as the whole some obseruance of my commandments is performed. And he shall be gloriously crowned in Heauen, who fightes lawfully in this world.

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C H A P. XIX.

*The Meditation of my hart is  
alwayes in thy sight.*

**V**What can euer be sweeter or more delightfull to the faithfull soule, then to meditate deuoutly of our Lord God her Beloued; that she might at least make him present to her by a carefull and diligent me-

more of him, whom she is not as yet able to behold by a cleare and blessed vision.

Let her therfor contemplate him by a glasse, whom she cannot behold face to face. And let her not fayle to search him out in the holy scriptures and types, whom she is not able to contemplate in his brightnesse. O that our endeavour of seeking the face of our Lord were neuer lukewarne, but euery day more feruent then other.

The soule which loues God indeede, feelles a burning desire in her hart to inioye his heauenly vision. Because the sight of God, is true Beatitude and perfect felicitie.

She wholly aspires therfor to this Beatitude, to thend her whole desire being once vnited to her end, may be faciated and quieted because no present good is euer able to content her.

To witt she hath learned by fre-

quent experience, that by how much further she wāders from heavenly Beatitude, by so much more unhappie, and disquiete she finds her selfe; sith nothing appears in creatures constant and permanent, and able to allay her burning desire.

2. Let her therfor returne vnto him by whom she was made; and let her sue to him for Beatitude, from whom she had her beeing; since in very deede, he onely who created the soule, is able to faciate her ardent desire with heavenly blissinges.

For he indued her with such an inclination and capacitie, that no other good besides himselfe is able to content her; no other ioy can be securely inioyed by her.

Stay not here then, o my soule, because this is not the place of thy rest and repose. But make still vpwards; ascende vp to him who

made thee.

For now too, euen he him selfe hath sent messingers to thee, and invites thee to ascēde vpwards. He sent thee as many messingers, as he gaue the inspirations and desires of eternall life; which hauing receiued prepare thy selfe to walke towardes him. Thou walkest, when thou earnestly desirest to see him; when thou carefully endeourest to please him; when thou renoucest all inferior things; when thou dost euery thinge for his loue, which thou oughtest either to doe, or leaue vndone.

For thou couldst not seeke him first if he had not first sought thee, and stirred vp good desires in thy hart.

For in very deede the soule that is not quickned with the wholsome rayes of the eternall sunne, languisheth away, not with lone, but with a pernicious ynkfomnesse.

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But as soone as her ice begins to thawe, and her sorow to be blowen ouer by the sweete breath of the approaching sommer, she vaxes hot with the feruent desire of the inspired light, and breathes after the secrets of the incomprehensible Diuinitie.

3. O vehemently burning heate of the true sunne, ah what ardent effects of loue thou dost then produce in the louing hart! Thou dost dispense the darke mists of sorow, and change paynefull actions into nothing. And dost abundantly solace the long dayes and yeares of pouertie with one onely simple influence of thine.

O thou soueraigne salue of the sorowfull, ô cleare light of the erring and seeking soule! Doe thou continually shine to my eyes; prepare a Mansion in my hart for thine owne abode; till the day of eternitie may a long thappare;

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O how sweete and delicious must thy presence needes proue since such singular consolations flow from the very weake memorie we make of thee ?

Ah with what a good will can I conuert my selfe vnto thee, how freely can I renounce all thinges, that I may be so happie as to be comforted by thy grace?

It cannot proue a thing of difficultie for a soule that truly desires to see thy face, to strippe her selfe of all the delightes of thinges present, sith she either alreadie feeles greater pleasures interiourly, or shortly and confidently expectes them from thy gracious hand.

4. For let no man harbour so foolish a cogitation, that thou canst longe leaue the deuoute soule disconsolate, or that she shall receiue small blessings of grace for all the victories she hath borne away against nature; because no terreane

delight, be it neuer so prosperous and well cōceiued, can euer be comparable, either in qualitie, or quantitie of sweetnesse, to thy celestiaall consolation.

Let thy carefull endeouours then, ô faithfull soule, be incessantly imployed to appeare such in the eyes of Christ thy heauenly spouse, that thou mayst be alwayes worthy of his grace and consolation. For by him, and in him, thou wilt most plentifully find what may bring thee cōfort in all kinds of anxietie.

By how much more frequently thou hast accessse so him, and by how much closer thou ioynest thy selfe to him, by so much more sweete and delightfull will he appeare vnto thee.

Marrie of thou withdrawest thy selfe, it will proue thy preiudice alone: but he permanently continuing in his ancient beautie, shall neither suffer discontent nor trouble.



Thou standst in neede of his goodnesse, he hath neede of none at all. Thou therfor maist be made more blessed by him, but he can acquire nothing by thyne aduantage. He alone is sufficient to him selfe: to him nothinge can be added, nor deminished.

All thinges that haue beeing, life, sense and vnderstandinge, haue the by his gracious goodnesse. And therfor most iustly all created thinges doe bleesse and prayse him.

5. O that I could expresse and sett him out to thee to the full, how willingly would I cōplye ther with. But what, ineffable cannot be expressed as it indeede.

As that also which is inconceable can neither be cōceiued by thought nor be deliuered by word of mouth.

And notwithstanding that so indeede it is, yet thinke alwayes of thy Creatour according to thy poore abilitie. And conserue the

memorie of his sweetnesse in the hart for thy consolatiō, till he please to discover to thee the presence of his countenance in his kingdome.

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## CHAP. XX.

**I** Said in the excesse of my mynd,  
I am cast from before thyne eyes.

My hart is stricke within me by the retardment of thy glorie. I will speake therefore and familiarly discourse with the bitternesse of my soule, The strength of thy loue, forces words from me, nor will it permit me to conceale anything from thee.

What shall I relate then? Behold  
ô my God, how euen in the tyme of peace, my bitternesse is most bitter.  
Who vnderstands not, he is ignorant of the meaning of these things.  
But it fares not so with me, for I vn

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derstand, and euen feele it, and  
thence it is that I blush not to  
sing the same with the Prophete.

I speake to thee my Lord God to  
whom all thinges are knowne, who  
didst bestow vpon me both that  
knowledge and that feeling, accor-  
ding to the measure of thy blessed  
will, least I might either more glorie,  
or be more esteemed by fooles.

I can onely therefore relate vnto  
thee, what I haue receiued from  
thee. And to what purpose is it, to re-  
late that to thee, since thou knowest  
all thinges, nor dost thou expect any  
comfort from them: for what con-  
solation can accrue to thee therby,  
who art the comfort of the deso-  
late?

The whole aduantage therfor is  
to aryse to me, who haue yet neede  
to be comforted by words: that I  
may excite the affection of my hart  
towards thee, by sweete and whol-  
some words, and therby procure

I iij

some refreshment to my poore desolate soule.

For truly since I cannot behold thee present, I will not fayle to become thee absent, because euen this is a signe of loue, and wonderfull deligtfull to the louing soule.

Now doth the sense of this verse begin to disclose it selfe, because it rightly sutes with the louing soule. For by how much more ardently it loues, and more vehemently breathes after eternall thinges, by so much more truly, it findes the vertue of this sentence to worke soueraignely in it.

Ah! These words are not cold faue onely to such as loue not: nor are they deafe organes but to those alone who stoppe the eares of their hart, The louing, and burning soule knowes it well; as often as her hart is enflamed with in her, as oftē as it is strucke with compunction out of the of loue eternall peace and repose.

She addressees her speech therfor to thee her Lord God (not to men) to who she desires to be vnkowne. And if at way tyme she speake to men, that which they heare is vented abroad, exteriourly ; marrie what she speakes to thee, shee speakes within, and that rather by louing then voyceing of it.

Loe, saith she, in peace my bitterness is most bitter. As though she did confesse, saying: As soone as I returned to the peace of my mynd by the helpe of thy grace, the deceiptfull state of the world proued more burdensome to me : for I obserue in this peace, at what a huge distance I am sett from the cheife peace.

And indeede while formerly I was prepossessed with terreane desires, and tossed to and fro by sundrie passions, I suffered much preiudice in my interiour house, and consequently in the contemplation of hea-

I iij

uenly thinges, for which it was but my dutie to haue exceedingly sorrowed; and yet I was not able to performe it, because I had lost the sense of internall sorrow by my great carelesnesse.

But now being freed from the tumultuous noyse of idle cogitations, I reside againe, in some smale measure, in the peace of my mynd; and am drawen to heauenly thinges with the whole bent of my hart; and now I more lament that I inioy not heauenly thinges, then I formerly lamented to find my selfe tortured, with earthly miseries.

2. It is therfor bitter to my soule to liue in this world, and lye vnder the heauie loade of sinne. Yet this bitterness becomes most bitter to me, when recollecting all my affections together I inioy a wished peace of hart, and am caried on with all the force of my soule towards the imbracements of eternall peace, and

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yet being hindred by the tye of my mortalitie I am not in a capacitie to attayne vnto it.

And therfor I am compelled to crye out vnto thee with sighes and sobbs, saying: vnhappy man that I am, who will deliuer me from this mortall body? I finde nothing more burdenfome to me, then pilgrimage like to wander from thee in this world, because labouring in loue I desire no other consolation then thy selfe.

For I haue learned by most euident experience, that my soule cannot be faciated with present goodes, nor obteyne true Beatitude, vnlesse it take vp a heauenly Mansion being vnited to thee.

For though, while she remaynes imprisoned in this body, she extessiuely loues, burnes and cōtemples, yet her loue cōtinues still insatiabie till she be freed from the same. And therfor her ayme findes no periode

I v

saue onely in the fruition of the cheife Good, and in the light of thy countenance.

3. O King of heauen who art so-  
uerainly amiable ; o my most beau-  
tifull beloued, singularly to be desi-  
red ; when shall I be replenished  
with ioy in beholding thy counte-  
nance. When wilt thou faciate my  
desire with a draynelesse fountaine?

My soule hath thirsted for thee,  
and it is wonderfully afflicted while  
it obteynes thee not. As long as I  
liue in earth, and yet see thee not,  
all that I discouer appears sadd  
vnto me. my hart waxes holt to such  
a degree, that it doth not once onely,  
but frequently pronounce in my ex-  
tremitie ; when shall I come and  
appeare before the face of my God?

My loue still goes on increasing,  
and my desire still more and more ta-  
kes fire, so that I neuer cease to  
weepe day and night while I conti-  
nually thinke where is my God.



For it is dearely sweete to the  
louer to weepe for thee, whilst it can-  
not inioy what it desires, but must  
still expect and be content to want  
it.

The louing soule is higher fedd,  
and more comforted with such teares,  
then though it possessed all ter-  
reane thinges: for did she loue them,  
she would not at all weepe for thee.

4. O how happie and agreeable to  
thee is the shedding of such teares; for  
they are our Deliueres from ioyes  
and temporall desires, and the deu-  
oute obteyners of heauenly conso-  
lations.

And thence it is that that streame of  
holy teares is granted onely to spe-  
ciall deuoute persons, and Louers  
alone.

They that are subiect to a sadd ne-  
cessitie, spend teares quite in ano-  
ther manner. One weepes because  
he is sicklie: another for that he is  
oppressed. This man because he is

iniured; that because he is crossed  
of his will.

But thou alone, ô deuoute soule,  
powrest out teares of diuine loue  
and as for temporall damages, and  
transitorie occasions, thou submit-  
test thy selfe to Gods true iudge-  
ment, and rendrest thankes.

Howbeit let none of the inde-  
uoute rabble who heares thee weepe  
dare to argue thee of follie or lacke  
of patience, sith such teares charge  
not, but recreate our hart; they doe  
not spott but purge: Nor doe they  
impaire the eye-sight which ordina-  
rily euen purifie the eyes of the hart.

Let others harbour what conceipt  
they please of thee, I can conceiue no  
otherwise then well, since enen I  
my self wish to be refreshed with the  
like teares. If, saith she, thou desirest  
to weepe with me, thou mayst also  
be comforted with me.

5. *Phil.* I Wish thy soule were for  
my soule, thou wouldst neuer be

ignorant what my senso is.

I know to whom I haue giuen credit: and I am certaine that it is more easie to deney heauen and earth to haue a beeing, then that God should not bee.

And I know that in verie deede he is the true good of my soule, and that I can neuer be blessed without the perfect contemplation of him.

Whose contemplation. because it is not yet bestowed and for euer confirmed vpon me, I infinitely lament, that I am depriued of so greate felicitie; that I am wrapped vp in the verie darknesse of this life; that I am so ouer-leaden with myne owne infirmitie, that I am not able to suffer the light, and that what I am able to meditate of the glorie of heauen lastes but for a smale moment, and yet is obscure withall.

6. Vvherfore I often iterate sobbs in lieu of songes; and my mynd is more still and more struke with

sorrow while I dayly heare, where is thy God?

For I leasurely consider, saying: where is my Good, and the perfect ioy of my hart?

V where is my true peace and repose? where are all these inspeakable blessings but in my God alone? And when shall I inioye these thinges, vnlesse I be vnited to him without the interposition of any other thinge? And when shall I arriue thither? I belecue, I hope, but doe not possesse.

Where is therfor my God whome I so much loue, and yet see him not; whose loue so often woundes me and absence contristates me, yet doth his visitation now and then recreate me? Where is my God, whom to haue once scene, is to haue learn't all.

Where is my God, in whom my hart and my flesh couets continually to reioyce. Where is my God, for

whom I sustayne so many labours  
and sorrowes? Whose memorie is  
delightfull, yet his presence much  
dearer, driues all sadnes from  
my hart. Where is my hope and all  
my glorifie? Is it not placed in thee  
my God the saluation of my conte-  
nance?

Discouer thy glorie to me, and  
turne not thy face from me, and I  
will leaue off lamenting.

If I chide a litle with thee, doe not  
vpbraide me with it; for vehement  
loue exercices many wonderfull  
passages. I am compelled to expect  
while yet my desire is still more and  
more spurrd on, and so a loue duell  
is all wayes kept on foote.

## CHAP. XXI.

*Of the remembrance of the heavenly contrie.*

**O** Lord I haue loved the comelinesse of thy house, the place of thy glorious habitation.

How willingly I would be with thee, thou o my God best knowest: and how much I desire it euen from my verie hart, I am not able to expresse. Nor doe I desire this onely while all goes not well with me, but euen then when I am in the greatest prosperitie imaginable, I wishe yet the permission to be still more and more with thee.

But when shall this eager desire of myne be faciated? I am wearie of being here, and yet stay I must: with thee I desire to be, and it is not granted me.

I Find no other way, but to suffer this delay with patience, and resigne my desires to thee.

For to what purpose should I murmur since so it must be? Be it farre from me. Nay euen many saintes had a longe patience with them selues in this world, while yet their hartes were in heauen.

And if it be thy blessed will to protract my pilgrimage also, I will obey too as longe as it shall please thee yet that my desire of being with thee, may be more agreeable in it expectation, I will in the interim meditate in my hart something concerning thy heauenly mansion.

Howbeit I dare not presume to diue into the least of the ioyes which thou hast prepared for such as loue thee; but will onely in my meditation take some snacks, as it were, whence my poore hart, which is often waighed downe, and infected with terrene thinges, may be

reuined againe, and rayſed vp into the hope of eternall life.

2. O that that day had once dawned wherein the ioyes of heauen had rauished my ſoule! How ioyfull ſhould I then be, and how happie would I eſteeme my ſelfe? ſince then I ſhould haue bene bleſſed in a permanent peace. I ſhould then haue had no neede to haue made any further inquirie, when no ſecretes can be vnknowne.

But my life is ſpent in darkneſſe and therfor no wonder if my eyes be obſcured amidſt the cloudes of glorie:

How beit I will rayſe vp myne eyes and behold at a farre diſtance, and ſalute that holy citie Hieruſalem which is built in heauen of liuely ſtones, to witt, of Angells and holy men continually replenished with great prayſe and high ſounding iubilation, in glorifieng God for euer and euer. Take courage



Take courage, ô my soule, flye vp alone with the winges of holy desire, free thy selfe from bodily senses, flitt out of the imaginations of this visible world to Gods holy habitation, to the new Hierusalem which is seated in euerlasting peace, crowned with honour and glorie, and perfected with the collection of all Good things.

3. Loe wonderfull and ineffable things which it is not lawfull for man to speake! sense is not capable, humane vnderstanding cōprehends not how glorious God is in his faintes, how admirable in his maiestie.

Extende thy thoughtes euen to the highest, dilate thy desires to perpetuall eternities, and say with the Prophete: glorious thnges are said of thee ô holy citie of God.

There, whatsoeuer we desire we haue, and what soeuer we haue we securely possesse. There God is

scene face to face, clearly and without mist. Not slightly and for an hours space, but clearly and without end.

There is the blessed and glorious Trinitie, and inseparable vnitie knowne, and is adored, prayed, and blessed by all the heauenly citizens.

There is that onely and singularly Beloued, more pretious then all riches; that wishfull treasure, my Lord Iesus Christ, the immortall Spouse of the Church, in whom are all the treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of God which are hidde from all eternitie, yet lye open to the Blessed.

O how iocunde are all the Saintes, in the presence of the Holy of Holyes, who is the cause and source of their saluation. For there he speakes not to them in parabolls, but maketh an open annunciation touching his father.

He is their booke, the VWORD which was with God in the beginning, teaching and replenishing all thinges, so that there is nothing wanting to them in glorie. O happie eternall glorie, which is not touching some short memorie, but concerning the presence of God in the brightnesse of the Saintes.

4. There is also the most glorious mother of God, the perpetually virgine Marie, adorning all the heauenly Court, with her gracefullnesse and beautie, whom the Quires of virgines accompanie and surround as so many rose flowres, and lilies of the vnder vallies.

There are the Angells and Arch-Angells rancked in their orders ioyfully attentive to the diuine prayes some being in the highest place, others in the midst, and others againe inferiour to those, deuided into their three Hierarchies.

There are the Patriarckes and

Prophetes, who of old being replenished with the holy Ghost, foretold the coming of Christ; and now acknowledge and know the same Lord Iesus Christ, to be the king of Kings, and true God, and blesse him with neuer-ceasing prayes.

Now they see their Redeemour face to face, whom they longe expected, and with their whole hart desired his coming.

There are the Apostles and Disciples of our Lord, the famous Proclamours of Christ, worthy of all veneration; full of grace and sanctitie, the Planters of the Catholike faith, but now the deuoute intercessours, in eternall glorie, for those whom they instructed and begott in Faith.

5. There doth cheisly shine the venerable Iohn, Baptiste of Christ, the speciall friend of the spouse.

Ther Peter the keeper of the keyes of Heauen, Paule that admirable

Doctour, Andrew, Philippe, Thomas, Iames and Iohn with rest of the Apostes and Euangelistes the Pillars of the Church: to imbrace their faith and to follow their example is to attayne to life euer lasting.

There are the valiant Martyrs dyed read in their bloud, and eternally happie with Christ whose bodyes though they were most cruelly buchered, yet could not torments separate their soules from Christ.

There are the most glorious Confessours, who by the contempt of this present world, deserued to be made Citizens of Heauen. There are the great and glorious Doctours, who by the merite of their faintly liues are suspended in a higest contemplation, hauing left behind them a liuely picture of sanctitie in their holy workes.

There are youngemen and virgi-

nes, the old with the younger sort; continually praying the name of God together; ascribing what euer good, and vertuous act they performed to the diuine Maiestie, alwayes gratefull, alwayes deuoute, alwayes iocunde, alwayes inflamed; neuer troubled with wearinesse, but still fixed vpon God by an vninterrupted contemplation.

O how glorious is this kingdome wherein all the saintes raigne with Christ, clothed with their first stole, and secure for euer. For there they now follow God where soeuer he goes, because there is noe separation from him: but reioyceing in our Lord they shall eternall reioyce.

6. Contemplate these thinges, o my soule, and fixe thy thoughtes aboue all visible thinges. That place, indeede is holy and our Lord is in it. Peace and ioy doe alwayes here abound. Here is the collection of all good thinges, and the perpetuall

petuall absence of all that is badd;

O that thou couldst but take any little taste of the vnspeakable ioyes of the saintes, in passing by, as it were, whence thy pilgrimage might be in some sort solaced; because with me thou shalt onely meete with labour and greife, the eager assaults of temptations, and calamities of the world.

O that the Authour of supernall light would daigne to inspire some comfort into thy hart, and not to send thee emptie backe to my leane and withered foode; but according to the riches of his superabounding grace, he would purifie and discharge thee from all materiall shap-  
pes and representations, and leade thee, though but for a moment, into the Abisse of his eternall charitie.

I Vvould to God thou couldst bring the formes and model of true sãctitie which thou shouldst imitate, from that holy sanctuarie. For the

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Model of heauenly and confirmed truthes are both better and truer, then those which are made good by terreane demonstrations.

Grant, O my Lord God, that I may taste and vnderstand what is the perfect felicitie of the Saintes, not so much by booke written vpon that subiect, but by the holy Ghost, who teacheth farre more in point of heauenly secretes, then the witt of man is able to reach to.

And grant withall that I may more feruently rayse vp my thoughtes to thinges still more and more spirituall, and amidst the frequent oppressions of tribulations, courageously to beare away the palme of patience, till by thy mercy I may arrive at the Beatitude which I so earnestly couet, hauing first payd the debt of this mortall body of myne.



CHAP. XXII.

*Of the accesse to the Sancta Sanctorum Iesus Christ the Kinge of Angells.*

I. **T**How art my verie King and my God. Ryse vp my soule, come and enter into the place of the admirable tabernacle, euen into the house of God.

For now it is fitt, that leauing all other thinges thou shouldst goe with an humble reuerence to salute our Lord Iesus Christ, thy Sauour and thy Redemour, who is the head of all principalitie, and power, the ioy and crowne of all the Saintes, the firme hope and sure expectation of all the faithfull.

He it is who made and redeemed thee, he laboured for thee, fought and onercame. He is thy Aduocate, and

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propitiation for thy sinnes.

He is thy Comforter, prouisor and Gouvernour. He is thy onely and singularly beloued, who feedes amongst the Lilies, and desires to reside in thy breast.

Who euer did thee so much Good? Who euer loued thee with so much Charitie? Runne to him; giue thy selfe ouer to him. Lay open thy hart to him, and in his presence disclose what euer thou hast longe endured in private.

None will better shew thee, and discouer vnto thee, what hope thou art to haue, or what counsell thou art to follow in humane affaires whose euent are verie different.

Let thy wishes, desires, and counsells remayne in him. The hope of men are vane: but he is a permanent peace.

By his meanes thou shalt gett accesse to the Father, and by him all grace is bestowed vpon thee, and

a more plentifull vertue is infused into thy hart.

2. Whether thou art sadd or ioy full haue alwayes recourse to him. He is the example of life, and the rule of iustice. He is the vnnchangable light of the soule, the loue of puritie, and ioy of the conscience.

For his sake thou shalt easily contemne all thats delightfull.

For his sake all affliction and aduersitie shall become more tolerable and being endured for his loue, they shall euen be delightfull to thee.

In a word from him, by him, and in him, are all thinges. Euery intention, euery actiō, speech, reading, prayer, meditation and speculation, ought principally to looke againe vpon him. By him saluation is bestowed vpon thee, and euerlasting life is prepared for thee.

For his sake thou shalt nether feare to dye, nor refuse to liue, Because thou art bound to commit

K iij

thy selfe to his fidelitie and to  
 preferre nothing before his loue and  
 honour. Approche therfor at this  
 present, and render thanks to thy  
 Redeemour.

3. O Iesus most sweete and most  
 amiable aboute all thinges. Be thou  
 most deuoutly saluted and highly  
 praysed, and blessed by all thy  
 creatures both now and eternally.

O most worthy Iesus, what  
 honour or what thanks-giueing  
 can I euer render thee for the infinite  
 mercyes which thou hast shewen  
 me?

And though I should find out  
 any thinge to bestow vpon thee, yet  
 were it not alreadie thyne before I  
 could giue it? What should I  
 therfor render or returne to thee  
 againe? I haue litle or nothing.  
 Can I out of my nothing make a  
 sacrifice?

Receiue yet the sacryfice of my  
 humilitie, my pouertie, and my

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nothing: and be all that euer thou  
hast bestowed vpon me ascribed  
vnto thee.

And let all the Quires of Angells  
which alwayes attend thee, pay  
infinitie prayſes to thee in my  
behalfe.

4. Let also all the ſoules of the iuſt  
repeate the ſame prayſes in a high  
iubilation. But what ſhall I yet  
further performe in the memorie  
and prayſe of thy moſt holy name?  
Much ought I to performe; I ſtand  
bound and oblidged by many titles,  
and yet I am hardly able to complie  
with the leaſt of them.

I will therfor read concerning thee;  
my moſt ſweete Ieſus, I will write,  
and ſinge of thee. My thoughts  
ſhall be of thee, my diſcourſe of  
thee, my workes for thee, my ſuffe-  
rances for thee. I will exult in thee,  
I will payſe, magnifie and glorifie  
thee. Worthyly will I adore thee,  
becauſe thou art my God, in whom

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I haue beleeued, whō I haue loned,  
whom I haue sought, whom I haue  
alwayes desired.

Glue me a signe in thy goodnes,  
that my eyes may behold thy glo-  
rious face in Heauen. I humbly cast  
my selfe at thy feete, earnestly with  
weepinge teares beseechinge thy  
clemencie that thou wouldst vouch-  
safe to be mercifull vnto me.

Vvrite my name in the booke of  
life, nor let that which thy holy hand-  
hath written, ever be blotted out.

5. I an vnworthy wretch, who  
come farre short of the saintes me-  
rites, confiding in the superabun-  
dant preragatiue of thy merites,  
implore thy mercy, that I may at  
least be numbered amongst the  
weakest and last of thy elected  
members.

¶ I know wel that my life and con-  
uersation is not such, that I should  
dare repose any confidence in my  
selfe, but all my hope and my con-

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solatio is placed and reposes in the price of thy pretious blood, wherein I wholly leaue my selfe, as I iudge it is my dutie, together with all that I haue done, or omitted, transgressed or merited.

Looke therefore vpon my abiectnesse and indigencie, my most Clement Iesus. Behold the affection of my hart which I harbour and haue for thee. Not for that I am worthy, but because thou art sweete and mylde, and disdaynest not to be touched and loued, euen by vnworthy subiects.

My owne impuritie terrifies me but thy admirable pietie and humilitie doth againe draw and intice me vnto thee, who didest, not onely in true charitie, please consent to become man, but euen to suffer, dye and be buried, for sinfull man.

And therfor I betake my selfe to thee, because I find nothing that good is in my selfe: supplie thou for

me, what my weaknesse is not able to effect.

6. Thou gauest me a desire to salute, prayse and blesse thee; because thou art my hope and my portion in the land of the liuing.

The desire of my hart is to be with thee in the kingdome of Heauen. But because my tyme is not yet come, I will expect thee till the euening.

In the meane while let this be my consolation in the place of my pilgrimage, that I am myndfull of thy name, and thy excessiue charitie, and that I haue thee present with me in faith, and the Sacraments of the Church.

It were altogether intolerable for me to liue in this world, had I not hope in thee, ô Lord. For whereas I must not giue way to reioyes with the world, I haue resolved to place my ioy in thee, least I might be otherwise quite destitute of con-



solation and ioy.

I should frequently and greatly erre, and be hugely tossed in my cogitations, should I not hold thee fast in my memorie and imagination.

And wheras I am not capable of thy immense diuinitie, nor am able to comprehend thy incorporall truth I betake my selfe with more securitie to the words and workes of thy humanitie, because while I thinke of those, I doe not at all recede from thy diuinitie.

Thankes be to thee, my good sweete and louing Iesus, for that thou hast daigned to become my brother, my bones and my flesh. And thankes be also to thy holy mother Marie, of whose virginalle flesh thou didest take the sacred members of thy body, and by the meanes of a resonable soule, didst perfectly vnite it to thy diuinitie that she is not onely worthily and

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according to faith, called the mother of man, but euen of God himselfe.

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## CHAP. XXIII.

*Of the holding on. to salute the glorious Virgine.*

1. **T**He *Queene* sat at thy right hand in a golden garment.

Though I be a person of no merite, but contrarily conscious to my selfe of many offences, yet haue I a great confidence in thy passion, ô Lord Iesus: and in the merites of the glorious Virgine Marie thy mother, is my great confidence. Of her I haue a mynde a litle to thinke, and I beseech thee allow that so it may be.

For who am I to dare to approche neerer, vnlesse I haue first obtayned licence. I know well that my indig- nitie ought not to appeare in her singular presence, whom the verie Angells venerate with astonishmet,

saying: who is this that ascendes out of the desert of this world, abounding with the delights of Heauen?

And therfor, ô my most sweete Marie. it is not fitting for me to consider thy glorie and honour, thy beautie and magnificence, because I am earth and ashes, yea more vile then either, because I am a sinner and prone to all euill.

But thou being raysted higher then the Heauens, hast the world vnder thy feete, and art worthy of all honour and reuerence by reason of thy sonns honour.

How euer thy ineffable pietie which passeth all thought, doth often draw and steale away my hart vnto thee: because thou art the comfort of the comfortlesse and art accustomed graciously to assiste the poore sinner.

2. And truly I find I greatly stand in neede of all good consolations and comforts, but especially of the grace of thy sonne, being in no wise

able to assiste my selfe.

And thou o most pious mother, if thou wilt youthfule to looke vpon my pouertie and abiectnesse thou mayst afford my weaknes many kind of helpes and reioyce my hart with most plentifull consolations amidst my pressures.

When therfor I am circumuented with any pressure or temptation, I will presently and without dreade haue recourse vnto thee; because mercy is there more prone, where grace is more plentifull.

But if happily I haue at any tyme a desire to applie my selfe to the high speculation of thy glorie, and honorably to salute thee from the bottome of my hart, I must proceede therin with a farre more pure hart, nor will it be expedient for me to goe on therin with out the assistance of the diuine light.

Certainly he deserues noe glorie, but great confusion, who hath the

boldnesse to approche to thy gate irreuerently.

But it behoues him that will draw neere thervnto to performe it with singular reuerence and humilitie, yet not without a good measure of confidence that through thy mercifull clemencie, he may be worthy to be admitted in.

3. With humilitie then and reuerence, with deuotion and confidence I make towards thee, beareing alōg with me in my mouthe Gabriells salutiō humbly to be presented to thee, which I ioyfully present vnto thee with my head bowed downe the more to reuerence thee, and with armes stretched out by reason of thy eminent deuotion, asking and beging, that the same were said for me by all the heauenly spirits, an hundred thousand tymes and more. For what I may offer to thee for the present, either more worthy or more delightfull, I am altogether ignorāt.

4. Let now the pious louer of thy name giue eare, Heauen reioyceth, the world stands amayfed when I say *Aue Maria*.

Satan flies, hell quakes when I say *Aue Maria*. The world becomes vile, the flesh waxes weake, when I say *Aue Maria*.

Sorrow departes, new ioy returnes, when I say *Aue Maria*.

Suggishnesse vanisheth, the hart melts with loue, when I say, *Aue Maria*.

Deuotion increafes, compunction begins, when I say, *Aue Maria*.

Hopes groue vp, and consolatiō is augmented, when I say, *Aue Maria*.

The mynd is recreated, and the languishing hart is strengthened in good, when I say *Aue Maria*.

To witt the delieiousnesse of this blessed salutation is so great, that it cannot be expressed by the tongue of man, but still is more high and more profounde then any creature

isable to diue into.

And therfor I humbly bow my knee againe and againe to thee, most holy Virgine Marie, and say hayle Marie full of grace.

Receiue this most deuoute salutation, my most clement Lady Mistressse Blessed Marie, and receiue me in it, that I may possesse something that may be agreeable to thee indeede; that may giue or begett confidence in thee, that may kindle more and more loue, and that may continue deuotion in me for euer to thy venerable name.

I. I wishe that all my members were turned into tongues, and all those tongues were changed into fire voyces, to satisfie my desire of honoring and saluting thee, ô Mother of God, with the whole strife of my hart, and find out the way to glorifie thee for euer.

And I wishe to God that I may worthily say this most sweete saluta-

tation of Gabriel, as a pure and holy Hoste of prayer, to expiate all my transgressions and sinnes, wherby I earned wroth, and greuously offended thy sonne, and very often offended thee and all the heavenly hoste.

I wish further (since my life is too frayle and subiect to fall) that all the blessed spirites and soules of the iust would say this high salutation, (ô most blessed Virgine Marie) with most pure deuotion, and feruent petition, for all my excesses and negligences, as also for all my vane, vncleane and peruerse cogitations; yea and that they would an hundred tymes repeate the same salutation to thy honour, wherwith the Father, sonne, and holy Ghost ordayned to salute thee first of all by the ministerie of the Angell; that so, at least, I might find out in some sort a worthy incense in the odour of sweetnesse, I who in my selfe find no

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goodnesse, or meanes worthily to recompence thee.

6. But now layd prostrate in thy presence, inuited by sincere deuotion, and wholly inflamed in the veneration of thy mildest name, I represent vnto thee the ioy of that salutation, when Gabriel the Archangel sent from God, entred into the secreete of thy bed-chamber, and reuerently kneeling downe, honored thy virginall face with a new and vnheard of salutation from the worlds beginning, and sayd: *Hayle Marie full of grace, our Lord is with thee, &c.*

Which salutation I too, after the manner of the faithfull, and that, if it were possible, with a mouthe of gold, desire againe and againe to pay vnto thee, and frō my very bowells I desire that all creatures would ioyne with me therein: *Hayle Marie full of grace, our Lord is with thee, blessed art thou amongst all*

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women, and blessed is the fruite of thy wombe Iesus Christ Amen.

7. This is the Angelicall salutation, which was framed by the Holy Ghostes inuention, and suted to thy singularly great dignitie and sanctitie.

This is a short prayer in words, but high in Misteries, Short in speech, ample in vertue, sweeter, then Honie, and more pretious then gold, alwayes to be chewed with the mouth of the hart, and most frequently to be read againe and againe, with purest lipps.

For it is conceiued in a verie few words, and yet defuseth it selfe out into an immence ocean of heauenly delightes.

But woe be to the slouthfull, indevoute, and distracted Prayers, who ponder not the golden words which they pronounce, nor taste those honie cupps; they, I say, who so often repeate *Hayle Marie*, with-

out attention and reuerence.

8. O most sweete Virgine Marie  
preserue me here after from so great  
negligence and slouthfulnesse, and  
procure pardō for my former fautes  
I wil be hereafter, more deuoute,  
feruent, and attentiuē in saying  
Hayle Marie, whether it be in the  
Quire, or in my Celle, in the gar-  
den, in the fields, or in what place  
foeuer.

And now after this, what shall I  
aske of thee, my most deare Mi-  
stresse? what can be better, more  
profitable and more necessarie for  
me an vnworthy sinner, then that I  
may find fauour with thee and thy  
dearely beloued sonne.

I desire therfor Gods grace by thy  
interuention and helpe, who, as  
the Angell giues testimonie, didst  
find the fullnesse of grace.

There is no petition dearer to me,  
nothing that I more neede then  
Gods grace and mercy.

Gods grace is sufficient for me, though I should obtaine nothing els. For what are all my endeouours without it? And againe, where it assistes and helpes nothing is impossible?

I haue many hundrie sicknessees of soule, but Gods grace is a most so-ueraigne salue against all passions, and it gracious presence mitigates them all.

I haue also great want of spirituall wisdom and knoweledg, but diuine grace is the most excellent Mistresse, and teacher of heauely discipline, which is presently sufficient to instruct me in all thinges necessarie.

For to demande any thinge more then whats necessarie, or to desire to know more then is lawfull, is the verie thing which grace disswades. Marie to humble our selues vnder it, and to remayne satisfied therewith, it admonishes and teacheth vs.

Obtaine therfor this grace for me, O clement and myld virgine Marie,

which is a thing so noble and precious that I ought reasonably not to desire or petitiō for any other thing then grace for grace.

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CHAP. XXIV.

*Of the consolation of our most pious  
Mother the Virgine Marie.*

1. **G**Race is defused in thy lipps.  
Goe to, I beseech thee O my lady mystresse, please now at least to speake with me, o blessed Marie. Open thy mouthe in thy sonns name, who blessed thee with all spirituall grace.

I am (saith she) the mother of Mercy, replenished with charitie and sweetnesse. I am the Ladder of sinners, the hope and pardon of the guiltie. I am the consolation of the sorrowfull, and the speciall ioye of the Saintes.

Come vnto me all of you that loue me, and be you filled with the breastes of my consolations, because I am pious and mercyfull to all that implore my ayde; come all, aswell iust as sinners, I will pray to the father for you, yea and the sonne too that they would be propitious to you through the holy ghost.

I inuite all, I expect all, I desire that all should come, I despise no sinner, but I reioyce in heaven with the Angells vpon the conuersion of a penitente sinner with greate loue and charitie: for so the pretious bloud of my sonne powered out for sinners doth not perish.

Come vnto me therfor o you sonns of men, obserue and see my zeale for you to God my sonne Iesus Christ.

Loe I will take his anger vpon me I will appease his wroth by diligent prayers whom you acknowledge you haue offended. Be couerted  
and

and come, doe penance and I will  
obtainne pardon for you.

Behold I stand betwixt heauen  
and earth, betwixt God and the  
sinner, and I purchase by my  
prayers, that the world may not  
perish.

Abuse not therfor Gods mercy  
and my clemencie, but beware of  
all offence, least indignation and  
intolerable reuenge fall againe vpon  
you.

I premonish my children, I be-  
seech my beloued to be imitators  
of my sonne, and me their mother.  
Be myndfull of me who can neuer  
forgett you: for I haue pittie of all  
that are in miserie, and am the pious  
Aduocate of all the faithfull.

2. O most gracious word reple-  
nished with all heauenly sweet-  
nesse! O sublime voyce flowing  
downe from heauen like dewdrops,  
sweetly diueing into our hartes,  
comforting sinners, and reioyceing

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the inst. O heauenly pipe how sweete  
a musicke thou makest in the des-  
paering conscience ! And whence  
is it that the mother of my Lord and  
master speakes to me ?

Blessed be thou ô most holy mo-  
ther, and blessed be the words of thy  
mouth, for honie and milke are  
vnder thy tongue, and the odour  
of thy words exceeds all sweete  
spices. O Marie as thou spokest my  
soule melted.

Loe as soone as the voyce of thy  
consolation sounded in my eares,  
my soule exulted and sprung for  
ioy. For my spirit is reuiued within  
me, and all my inward partes are  
ouerspread with a new ioy ; be-  
cause good and ioyfull newes are  
this day brought to me by thy  
meanes.

I was sorrowfull indeede, but now  
thy voyce doth ouerioy me : for thy  
voyce is sweete in my eares. I was  
oppressed and desolate, but now I



am mentoned and comforted. I

For thou didst extend thy hand  
downe from heauē and touched me;  
and I was cured of my infirmities. I  
could scarcely speake, but now I  
haue a mynd to singe and to render  
thee thanks with magnificence.

I was quite wearied of liuing;  
but now I feare not euen to dye;  
because, knowing that thou art an  
Advocate with the Father, I retayne  
thee for my cause, to whose mercy I  
commend my selfe from this verie  
houre, and so for euer after.

For since thou begunst to speake  
to the hart of thy desolate orphānt, I  
forthwith began to be changed to  
the better, and to be powerfully  
retreated within my selfe: I lay as  
one desperate, but thy consolation  
came; and raysed me vp with  
gladnesse, sayng.

3. What is the matter sonne? and  
who are they that will hurt thee?

Feare not my child, I will looke

L ij

thee. I liue, and my soone Iesus thy brother liues, who is at the right hand of his father, and he is a faithfull Bishoppe and Mediatour for thy sinnes.

Thou art cheifely to repose thy confidence in him, as being the giuer of life, and the Destroyer of death. Being nowe temporally borne of me, and be gotten eternally by the father, he was giuen to the whole world for its saluation.

Beholde whēce thy helpes and consolation must aryse; by whom also thy faith and victorie. Let Iesus and Marie liue alwayes in thy memorie, and thou shalt not neede to feare the enemyes dartes.

4. O happie houre wherein thou daynest to be present to my troubled hart, O most pious virgine Marie. O that I might heare thy comfortable words for a longer space; for they doe vehemently inflame and affect my hart, and in-

wardly touche and instruct me.

Blessed be thy breasts, ô divine  
Marie, which neuer cease to stream  
out the most delicious milke of  
consolation. For by reason of the  
superaboundance of the grace of the  
somtyme sucking child, thy beloued  
sonne Iesus, thou art not able to  
refuse thy inbred mercy to such as  
demand it, but euen frequently  
favourst those that greatly trans-  
gresse.

O mother of singular pietie, of  
greatest mercy and charitie! O in-  
comparable virginemother, who art  
amiable and venerable to every one.  
O mother of the singular sonne of  
God, who was borne of thee! yea  
mother of all Christendome in ge-  
nerall, and withall the verie cordiall  
and speciall mother to every one in  
particular, according as they are  
devoted to thee.

O virgine of virgines, Queens  
of the world, and Lady of Heaven,

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draw me after thee, least I lye vnder the waight of my finnes. Powre downe grace, streame downe sauing dew from Heauen, that I may indeede deserue to be del by experience that thou art the mother of grace, and the fountaine of mercy.

O yes. I am the mother of faire Loue, of chaste and holy feare, of pious speech, and sweete consolation. And therfor hearing my name, exulte with all thy hart, reuerently bow downe, and willingly salute me: for in honoring the mother thou honorest the sonne too, whose father is God. For I am Marie the mother of Iesus, and this name shall remaine with me for ever.

And who is Iesus Christ the sonne of the liuing God. He is the sauiour of the world, the King of Heauen and earth, Lord of the Angells, Redeemour of the faithfull, and Iudge of the liuing and the dead. He is the hope of the pious

the consolation of the Denuote, the peace of the myld, the riches of the poore, the glorie of the humble, the strength of the weake, the way of the erring soule, the light of the blind, the staffe of the lame, the oyntement of the withered, the releife of the oppressed, the assistance of the afflicted, and the singular refuge of all good people.

Blesse the sonne together with the mother, and thou shalt be beloued of the Father. Giue honour and glorie to him as oft as thou dost any reuerence to me. His glorie is my ioy; and my prayse is his veneration.

Place Iesus and me as a scale vpon thy hart, as a scale vpon thyne arme. Vvhether then thou sittest or standest, readest or prayest; writest or workest, let Iesus and Marie be ofte in in thy mouthe, but alwayes in thy hart.

6. Be it so Amen. Let all people.  
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tribes and tongues serue thee, and let all creatures bow downe before thee. Let the Heauens say, reioyce Marie, and let the earth make answer: Hayle for euer and euer. Let all the saintes together confesse to thy glorious name; and let all the compaignie of the Deuoute exulte before thee, and the lambe Iesus Christ thy sonne, our Lord. Amen.

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## CHAP. XXV.

*Of thankes-giuing for benefits receiued.*

1. **L** *Et Gods name be blessed for euer. Let all that I doe, reade or write, all that I thinke speake or vnderstand, tend to thy seruice, o Lord God. Let euery worke of myne begin from thee, and end by thee, and in thee.*

Receiue backe againe what thou

haste, given me, and let the streames  
returne backe to the source when  
they tooke their origine. It neuer  
remaynes better with me, nor  
appeares more delightfull to me,  
then when I sincerely render backe  
to thee againe whome it had it, all  
that I either doe or thinke as I  
ought.

I haue a desire to render thanks,  
but then I doe it indeede, I when af-  
scribe all to thee, nothing to my selfe,  
of all that I either receiue or ren-  
der.

What can I, a wicked and slothe-  
full seruant, returne backe againe to  
thee? My seruice is nothing, though  
I should performe all thou com-  
mandest me. Therfor it is that I am  
reduced euen to nothing, and am in  
verie deede humbled.

And it is well for me that thou  
haste humbled me, that thou alone  
mayst be iustified, thou alone be  
prayed by all mē, and let that most

L. v.

vile dust neuer glorie in himselfe.

How be it I will not desiste, but will still desire to prayse thee with hart and mouthe. For though it be true that I cannot worthily performe it, yet is it altogether vnworthy to be silent without any acknowledgement. Thou my God art my prayse, and my singing is still in cheere.

O he that were also to take a small taste of thy glorie, and know what it is to glorie in thee, how little or nothing would he value all externall glorie which fauours vpon vs. O how soone would all terrene delight waxe bitter to him, who had but a little tasted thy sweetness.

O how would he burne, who had but one small sparke of thy charitie! He would most willingly contemne all thinges, that he might be permitted to stick to thy loue. And truly all that he could doe or suffer for thy loue would seeme

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sweete and light to him.

O how would he exulte, how vehemently would he spring after thee, whyle he called to mynde all thy gracious giftes. He would seeke nothing more dearely; he would possesse nothing more happily; he would pursue nothing more greedily then that which tends to thy loue.

To witt by louing he would not feele his burden: because loue would beare all his loades. And therfor they that complaine of their burden testifie therby the smale measure of their loue.

To serue thee for loues sake, is most contentfull, and the solace of all labours. Loue lookes not to its owne commoditie, nor feares to suffer incommoditie and losse, but aymes at thy blessed will in all thinges.

3. O Christ how sweete a thing is thy loue! how well it sounds, how

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sweetly it enters, how strongly it holds and claspes! May it for ever tye me to thy seruice; may it wholly possesse me, may it wholly subiect me to it, and may it render me wholly thyne owne.

For then I am most free, when I am made captiue by thy loue, and deprived and stript of all proprietie. I am indeede thy slaue, o lord, thyne I say, because thou didest buy me.

Willingly am I thyne, nor am I ashamed to be properly thyne. I will not be at myne owne dispose; put thou to thy helping hand, that I may be freed from all proprietie.

Doethou blow, and kindle, and stire the smale sparkes, and my hart will flame vp, and become pure, cleare and bright; because thy loue putts all vice to flight, and consumes all sinnes. Doe thou hold fast the bond of loue, and my poore inconsiderable seruice will stand firme.

4. Nor am I ignorant that no advantage accrues to thee by my seruice; howbeit it is my aduantage the while to doe what I know is gratefull in thy sight. God grant I may so doe, and not be silent: yes I will speake, and not conceale thy workes.

But when shall I be sufficiently able to call to mynd all those benefits which thou didest conferre vpon me an vnworthy wretch? Thou didst ô Lord shew thy great mercy vpon me thy seruant. But I, alas! did not returne thee thanks according to thy goodnes to me.

And I am therfor hartily touched with sorrow and greife, because I am not able to answer to thy benefits which are so many and so great ones. I would I could but once worthily and to the full render thee thanks for all of them.

But what can possibly come out of a thinge which conteynes no-

thing? Nothing can be drawn out of an emptie vessell. What shall I then doe? something needes must I giue; because it is not lawfull to appeare before thee with emptie hands, for euery vngratfull persone is displeasing to thee.

5. O that I had any thing in the whole world to bestow vpon thee, that might proue gratefull in thy sight. What dost thou desire of me. Beloued Lord? For alas thou needst none of my riches. Why dost thou exact a present at my hands then? There is none richer then thy selfe and yet thou demandest somewhat of me. I will haue all saist thou, for this is expedient for thee, if thou wilt merite my grace. I will bestow grace, and thou shalt returne thanks, and so we will continue mutuall loue and charitie. Giue me thy selfe, and thou hast giuen all.

O Iesus, fountaine of all good, fountaine of life, fountaine of grace, foun-

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taine of delights, fountaine of  
eternall wisdom, powre vpon me at  
this house, most pious Lord, the  
gift of heauenly grace, and teach  
me alwayes to render thee thanks,  
and to bestowe my selfe vpon thee  
before all other thinges, because  
this is the most dearly gratefull  
gift that I am able to bestowe.

I iudge this to be so, and I giue  
full consent vnto it. Receiue me  
then, I am wholly thyne, and all  
thats myne is thyne.

There is onely one thinge which I  
cannot giue thee. And what is that?  
marrie my sinne which is properly  
myne owne, and therfor is not to  
be imputed to thee. Sinne is myne  
paine and euery defect which can  
possibly be found in me, ought to be  
ascribed to my selfe alone. But to  
thee glorie and thankesgiuings for  
all thy benefits.

6. But now to relate thy benefits  
I will cull a few out of many, which

are most eminent, and most moue. For to reporte them all, neither tyme permittes, nor are my thoughtes capable of them.

For their number passe measure, and their greatnesse oppresse our senses, nor can any rate be putt vpon their worth and dignitie. To witt they cannot be bought, because they are giuen gratis: and therfore thankes alone are required for them, otherwise they are all taken away from the vngratfull man.

7. In the first place, therfor, I giue thankes vnto thee, my Lord God Creatour of all thinges, that thou didst please to create me a reasonable man, and to place me aboue all the workes of thy hands, hauing made me, as to the soule, to thine owne similitude and liknesse.

This was the great and first gift bestowed vpon me by thy free goodnes. Nor did I make my selfe, but thou madest me, bringing me into

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this world by the meanes of my parents, whom thou madest thy instruments therein. And loe, I am better then any meere body, I am preferred before all the beastes, and the bides of the ayre: as being made to Gods liknesse, capable of the eternall wisdome, and by nature partaker of the increated light, and vnchangable Truth.

I giue thee therfor eternall thākes, for that I am, I liue, and vnderstand; wishing and demanding that all the creatures which are in heauen and earth, would all ioyntly with one accord prayse thy holy name, which is admirable and to be extolled, and magnified for euer.

I blesse thee, Father and Lord of heauen and earth, who didst create all of nothing by thyne onely begotten sonne, in the holy Ghost.

And thou didst create all thinges of thyne owne pure and free will, not out of any necessitie, to make

knowne thy power to the sonns of men. And thou didst dispose all thinges in this visible world in a most comlie manner, by thyn owne inuisible wisdom, coeternall to thy selfe.

Let all thy creatures blosse thee who are subiect to thee in all thinges and made by thee to serue mankinde. Vpon thy command the heauens sende downe rayne in due season, and the earth bringes out varietie of fruites.

The sunne and moone shine cleare vpon the earth, and the starres make their nightly circuites. The fountaines run the, riuers flowe, and the diuersitie of fish swimme in the waters. The birds of the ayre hoppe vp and downe, and singe. The goates Hynes, and Hartes skippe in the montaines. Sheepe and horse loue their good pastures, and diuersity of wild beastes inhabite the desertes.

The meadowes springe, the fields



flowrish, and all the trees of the wild woodes produce their flowres and fruits. These are thy workes, O God, who alone workest great wonders.

8. The seconde benefit bestowed vpon me, is, the Mysterie of the Incarnation, the worke of our Redemption, and the price of our saluation; that is to say, the fruite of thy death and passion.

O worke of greates pietie, worke of the most excellent charitie, of admirable humilitie and singular patience! Man did not merite this; none of the Angells was able to performe this worke; the Prophetes stood astonished at it, the Apostles saw and preached it, all the faithfull receiued it; and the Elect doe cheifly loue and worshippe it.

This benefit being well pondered excites good desires, inflames our hartes; nourishes deuotion; purges the affection; drawes to heauen

wards; withdrawes from the world;  
leades vs to Christ, and vnites our  
soule vnto him.

This gift farre surpasseth the  
former. Yet it was one and the same  
Iesus Christ our Lord God, who  
bestowed them both. It was a thinge  
of no aduantage to me to haue bene  
borne into this world, vnlesse I had  
had the blessing also to be redeemed  
by the price of his pretious blood.

¶ Grace therfor came to my succour,  
the diuine mercy grew to a great  
highth, and a plentiful redemption  
was made: for corrupted nature  
could not be repaired without the  
Redeemours assistance.

O Father of Mercies, and God  
of all consolatiō! Thou deliueredst  
vp thy sonne to redeeme a lost ser-  
uant. O the wonderfull dignation of  
thy pietie towards vs, which neither  
the witt of man nor Angell is able  
to explicate!

9. O most sweete Iesus, the

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beginning and end of our saluation.  
As thou alone knew the meanes, so  
thou alone hadst the power to suc-  
cour vs miserable and lost creatufes.  
For thou didst vouchsafe to appeare  
vnto men in the most vile and abiect  
forme of a seruant; and most willin-  
gly receiuedst the sentence of a most  
cruell death, ( moued by thy mer-  
cifull charitie alone ) for vs mortall  
and poore wormes.

O Iesus the fountaine of pietie and  
Goodnes, light of the eternall light,  
and the mirrour of the diuine  
Majestie without spott or blemish.  
Inflame my hart with the Medita-  
tion of this ineffable benefit which  
thou didst bestowe vpon me and  
the world.

This is indeede a generall benefit,  
as well as the first, sufficient for the  
saluation of all men, yet not produ-  
cing fruite in all, by reason of the  
infidelitie, and malice of many, but  
it is saluatiō and profitable to all the

Elect, for whom all things were created, and renewed againe by thee, O Iesus Christ.

O Good Iesus how many benefits thou haste done vs in thy humanitie! Thou wast made our brother, and our flesh, that we might be numbred among the sonns of God, and haue access to the Father by thee, whose wroth none but thou wast worthy to appease, of whom he said, *This is my beloued sonne in whom I am well pleased.*

Happie soule which carefully obserues, affectionally loues, worthily venerates the mysteries of our Redemption, and giues thanks to thee for them all, and is more confident in thy counsell then in his owne proper sense.

For none indeede is capable, of himselfe, to find out this Mysterie, nor is it reached vnto by the wisdom of man; but rather by the strength of faith, and by the eye of a

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pure hart enlightened from above.  
Blessed is he who deserues to receiue  
by grace, what the wise of the world  
were not able to know by nature.

O Iesus the wisdome of the fa-  
ther, make me to vnderstand thy  
great and admirable Mysterie of thy  
Incarnation, by the light of faith.  
Because the comfort of all our sal-  
uation, the great plentie of charitie,  
and the inscrutable fulnesse of thy  
wisdome, consistes, and shines in it.

Let thy seruant make progresse  
by the increāse of all vertues, and by  
diligente practise of good actions,  
and let him grow still better ac-  
quainted, with this memorable se-  
crete of the incarnation, and with  
the depth of the passion, and let him  
be intirely contracted into thy sa-  
cred bowells.

That great dignation and won-  
derfull charitie is indeede a hugely  
deepe Abisse and, as it were, a cer-  
taine heauenly ocean, which is not

fordable; wherein the great and litle spirituall fishes, which thou hast hemmed in, within the net of faith, doe swim too and fro.

10. Let therefore, so great a charitie and goodnes, so great humilitie and myldnesse liue in my memorie; and let alwayes something of the mysterie of the Incarnation and passion, as a most gratefull francinsense, and a most sweete balsome to be offered to God the father, occur, and be mixed in euery sacryfice of prayer, and euery meditation I make.

Let Now those that are redeemed by our Lord, whom he redeemed out of the hand of the enemy, singe a canticle of diuine prayses together with me; let them performe a Hymne of the iubilation of hart with thanks-giuing. And let all the Angells which stand round about the Throne, fall groueling vpon their faces, and adore the lambe of God,

God, who takes away the sinnes of the world, saying:

O Lord, Laude and honour become thee. Benediction and charitie, thanks-giuing, and prayse, fortitude, Empire, Maiestie and wisdom, be vnto thee, our Lord God Iesus Christ, for euer and euer Amē.

II. The third benefit nothing inferior to the former, is the grace of iustificatiō, wherby thou drewest me to my conuersion, and to the amendment of my life, bestowing vpon me repentance for my sinnes, hope of pardon, a resolution to liue well, and to serue thee for euer.

S. Paule dearely considering this, exhorts his Disciples not to proue vngratefull for so great a benefit, but that (being alwayes myndfull of the heauenly grace) they due to him that called them from aboue. Looke (saith he) brethen, vpon your vocation; because there are not many wise men, not many power-

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full; but God made choyce of the weake thinges of the world.

These thinges I reflect on in my selfe, who being contemptible and not vsfull for the world, was deli- uered by thy holy vocation, out of the shipwracke therof, and was made a fellow in thy colledge therein to serue thee. And least I might after- wards looke backe againe, I freely and of myne owne accord, bound my selfe by vowe, which yet I ascribe not to my merites, but to thy prouidence.

For this gift I greatly prayse and blesse thee, because thou daignest to call me by thy grace, giuing me a Good will, and casting the load of sinne away from me.

For thou didst subiect my necke to thy sweete yoke, softening my hart with the vntiō of thy spirit, which the world neither knowes, sees, nor vnderstands. Conserue this will, mercifull Lord, and furthermore increase the gift of grace as long as I abide in



this visible light.

I acknowledge this vocation to be a great benefit, which is not giue to all, but to whom it was prepared by the Father: because it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of god taking mercy, that euery mouth that bables vane thinges maybe stopt and the whole man may be subiect and that all fleshe may not glorie in thy sight, ascribing any thing to himselfe, of his owne merites, or his good workes, but to thee.

For if thou wouldst haue dealt with me according to thy iustice, I had bene alreadie deputed among those which are in hell. But thy pietie spared me, ô Lord, and granted pardon least I might haue bene made like to the sonne of eternall perdition.

I am bound therfor to giue thee great thanks for so gracious a benefit, and may I all the dayes of my life, worthily answer therunto by my wordes and actions.

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And I beseech thee to accept of my poore endeouours in way of thankes giuing, wherby I desire to serue thee, as I am oblided by charitie; and that the debt of my seruice may originally proceede, and finally tend to thy good pleasure, and honour; and that my hart may neuer beauerted from thy loue, but that my body and soule may ioyntly persiste and perseuere in thy most holy seruice, as long as there is breathe within me, that I know what I doe, and that I am capable to be myndfull of thee.

Let my mouth neuer cease to prayse thee, and let the aboundance of thy benefits neuer recede from my hart. But if thy seruant should liue many yeares, yet shall he not therfor be backward, or feare to serue thee in all humilitie and subiectiō. Yea I will serue thee as deuoutly and willingly in all thinges, as I did that very day and houre that my hart was first instructed and confirmed by

thee, that it should follow thee alone  
as Lord and Master.

Nor shall any infirmitie, or emergent aduersitie crosse this my determination. But as I now stand affected and resolved in thy hearing, ô my God, so by thy assistance I desire to accomplishe what euer hath issued out of my lipps.

But if happily any fraltie or fault should infringe this my will and purpose (for there is no man liuing vpon the face of the earth so iust that he offends not) yet will I not distrust or depart from thee, but I will forthwith fall downe vpon the kees of my hart with great contritiõ and teares, exposing my sorrofull and gawled conscience to be cured by the salue of thy grace, and to haue my good purpose more powerfully confirmed then formerly it had bene.

I will not repent me of my good vndertaking, but rather giue thee

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thankes, that I was at least once fauoured by thee to giue consent to serue thee eternally.

And thou art powerfull enough, ô Almighty and mercifull Lord, (thou who didst create me of nothing and thou who from the begining didist foreknow the infirmitie and fall of man) most graciously to pardon me all my offences, to repaire all my omiissionses, to restore my losses, to cure my woundes, to purge my vncleanesses, to enlighten my darknesse, to bow my stiffenesse, to inflame my dead imbres, to reedifie my ruines, to regayne or redeeme my negligéces, to correct my transgressiós, to facilitate my difficulties to restrayne my curiositie, to recollect my distraction, to compose my inordinate affections, and change the whole state of my mynde to the better, so that no part of my former purpose may be wanting, but that euen euery occasion of euill

concurrer to my aduantage, while I remayne humbly subiect vnto thee.

This is a change of the right hand of the highest ; this is a heavenly visitation ; this is a plentiful effusion of diuine pietie.

12. Receiue also I all the deuoute prayers of holy Church for thankes-giuing, together with the vnanimous consent of all the Court of Heauen.

Let also all the saintes that euer haue bene from the begining of the world, who were called and inlightened by thy grace, and all the faithfull Christians withall, of euery people, tribe, tongue, nation who now are, or heretofore haue bene, or here after shall be, conspire together to honour and prayse thy most sweete and glorious name which is blessed aboue all names.

Let them repleate them againe and againe, and with an infinite ioy gather together the vniuersalitie of

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prayſes to be duely offered to thy holy name; and that, as many tymes, as there are ſtarres in Heauen, fiſhes in the ſea, graſſe piles vpon the earth, and letters in bookes.

And after they haue performed all this in a moſt ſuppliant manner in my behalfe; I will yet further confeſſe vnto thee, there is nothing yet done bearing any proportion to the ineffable prayſe due to thy name, which I deſire to prayſe with all my force, and by all meanes to magnifie; till I may at length arriue to thoſe courtly prayſes, to which the voyces of mortall men are not as yet able to reache, and to proſequite them.

13. Thou now ſeeſt, ô my ſoule, the greatneſſe and dignitie of the benefits of thy Lord God, thy Creator and Redeemour, for which all creatures are not able to render con-digne thankes, which he created to the prayſe and glorie of his eternally

bleſſed name: he, I ſay, who needed not the glorie of men, he alone being onely ſufficient to himſelfe. He that is his owne glorie.

Behold how I haue not bene able to place all his benefits before thyne eyes; ſo great is the multitude of them!

But out of that great abondance I culled three pretious preſents as the Magi did when they were to offerre to our Lord, wherein I had an ayme, to conclude, in a manner, all the reſt.

For if you diligently obſerue it, euery benefit is either, of nature, of grace, or of ſuperexcellence; and what ſouer is els, may very conueniently be reduced to theſe three. In creation thou haſt the benefit of nature, in thy redemption the benefit of ſuperexcellence, and in thy iuſtification that of grace.

For all and euery one of which

glorie be to thee, ô holy trinitie, one  
equall deitie before all ages, now,  
and for euer. Amen.

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